

Editorial:

The Einstein Library

There exists a situation that tests the viability of Yeshiva University and its fundamental basis as an institution dedicated to creating a Torah world in a secular society. While creating this world, Yeshiva has contributed greatly to the dissemination of secular scholarship and expertise, resulting in not only far-reaching technological advances, but an even greater Kiddush Hashem. With a firm grip, Y.U. grasped the two poles of Torah and Madah, and held itself high.

It is therefore all the more disturbing that in the pursuit of these vast contributions, Y.U. seems to have lost sight of some of the Torah values on which it was founded.

The issue at hand is the fact that as school policy, the library of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine remains in full operation on certain days of Yom Tov as well as various hours of Shabbat.

A Brief History

The situation is as old as the medical school itself. Because of numerous demands from members of AECOM's community in 1955, a compromise which allowed for the library to remain open on Sukkot and on the last days of Pesach

was decided upon. Although the library would remain closed on most of Shabbat and on the first days of Pesach as well as Shavuot, its hours would remain fixed, regardless of when Shabbat began or ended.

An abortive attempt to close the library on all Yomim Tovim met with extreme displeasure in the mid-sixties, including threats of resignation by members of the faculty. Thus, after an eighteen-month trial period, the plan was abandoned, and the library returned to its previous and current compromise.

The magnitude of the Chilulei Hashem and Chilulei Halacha resulting from this quasi-solution cannot be tolerated. The Halachic and aesthetic ramifications involved are as large as they are numerous.

The use of the library brings to mind a number of aveirot including writing, tearing, using of electric machines and other acts of Chilul Halacha performed by students and employees. Those who wish to just sit and read must contend with the electric eye at the entrance, and sign out reserved books. What is therefore involved is a transgression of the aveirot of "Lifnei Iver Lo Titen Michsol" and "M'sayeil L'Dvar Aveirah." Yeshiva University is not only offering

continued on page 2

HAMEVASER

A Student Publication of Traditional Thought and Ideas
Published by The Jewish Studies Divisions of Yeshiva University

Vol. 17, No. 3

© 1978, HAMEVASER

NEW YORK CITY

November 28, 1978

Beis Medrash to Open Soon

By Louis Tuchman

The Fischel Beit Medrash in Tannenbaum Hall has been undergoing renovation since August. The work has caused the study hall to move to the Morgenstern Shul. The renovations include the replacement of old and worn fixtures and improvements in the rooms' appearance. Dr Sheldon E. Socol, Vice President of Business Affairs, estimates that the total cost of this work will amount to \$100,000.

Because the money for this project is not from the regular Yeshiva budget but is the result of special funding, previously unavailable, the work could not begin until late summer. The administration opted to allow the work to extend into the academic year instead of delaying the beginning of the project until next summer.

The renovations are extensive. The entire floor was removed and replaced with a new plywood floor topped with new tiles. A new ceiling was hung,



Fischel Beit Midrash during renovation

complete with recessed fluorescent fixtures. Above the ceiling, new air conditioning ducts were installed. They will be controlled

by a new thermostat control that is being installed. The walls are being covered with cloth-backed

continued on page 3

Rebbeim meet with Rabbi Lamm Discuss Problems in RIETS

By Alan H. Friedman

On Tuesday, October 31, 1978, Rabbi Zevelun Charlop convened a meeting of the RIETS and YP faculty. Rabbi Charlop, Director of the two schools, chaired the meeting, which was

attended by Rav Soloveitchik, Rabbi Lamm and the majority of the rebbeim. Besides the opportunity to meet collectively in an atmosphere of free-flowing ideas, the gathering had a two-pronged purpose: to discuss current problems in the two schools and to review the changes taking place in RIETS.

The first problem to come under scrutiny concerned shiur placement. Among other reasons, proper and satisfactory placement is hindered by the diverse range of students' backgrounds. To review the placement procedure, a committee was established, composed of Rabbi Blau, Bronspigel, Katz, Romm, Schussheim and Willig. Rabbi Bronspigel mentioned that one idea which will be suggested is more emphasis on the use of the rebbe's student evaluation in conjunction with placement by the YP office. Proposals coming in by the spring will hopefully be implemented by September, 1979.

The question of shiur attend-

Leon Stitskin Dead at 67; Noted Lecturer Mourned

by David Nevitsky and Yaakov Chaitovsky

Rabbi Dr. Leon Stitskin, Director of Community Relations and Special Publication at Yeshiva University and Professor of Jewish Philosophy at Bernard Revel Graduate School until his retirement this fall, died on Friday, November 3rd at the age of 67.

Dr. Stitskin received his BA and MA from Hiram College, and his Semicha from RIETS. In 1956, he earned his Doctor of Hebrew Letters from Bernard

Revel Graduate School. He also studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Dropsie University in Philadelphia from 1934 to 1942. Dr. Stitskin was spiritual leader of Beth Israel Congregation in Warren, Ohio and in 1943, he was called to Rochester, New York and the Beth Israel Center, serving there until 1951. Dr. Stitskin then went to Philadelphia until 1953, when he joined the staff of Yeshiva University, subsequently serving with distinction for the next twenty-five years.

Dr. Stitskin was a noted



Dr. Leon Stitskin, zt"l

author, writing many books and articles dealing with Jewish concerns. He authored *Judaism as a Philosophy*, *Judaism as a Religion*

continued on page 9

Rabbi Senter of the Chaf-K Speaks on Hashgachot

by Noah Witty

"One may be conversant in Halakhah and yet not know what is and is not a problem from a food technology point of view." Those were the words of Rabbi H. Zech-



Rabbi H. Z. Senter

ariach Senter on Monday night November 6, 1978 during an 80-minute lecture to a group of more than seventy students in the Morgenstern Lounge. This was the first in a proposed series of lectures organized by the Kashrus Committee of the Student Organization of Yeshiva, chaired by Gary Menchel. Coordinating the series is Shlomo Gogac.

Addressing himself to the questions of "Why is Hashgachah needed?", "Where are the Sh'lot?", "How do Hashgachot solve problems?" and "Why does a processed food product need Hashgachah?", Rabbi Senter, founder

continued on page 11

Inside This Issue

Gesher Foundation	pg 4
The Message of Chanukah	pg 5
Rav's T'shuvah Drasha	pg 6
Tribute to Dr. Stitskin	pg 6

HAMEVASER

500 West 185th Street, New York, N.Y. 10033. Editorials and Advertising Office 781-5440. Published monthly during the academic year by the Student Organization of Yeshiva, James Striar School Student Council, and Erna Michael College Student Council. The views of signed articles are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of HAMEVASER or Yeshiva University. Editorial policy is determined by majority vote of the members of the Governing Board. Advertising rates are available upon request. Subscription rate: \$2.50 per year.

SAM SCHWARZMER Editor-in-Chief

Jack Gross	Hyman Schwarzberg
Associate Editor	Executive Editor
Stuart Fischman	Joel E. Salzman
Managing Editor	Senior Editor
Michael Ackerman	Joel Selter
News Editor	News Editor
Pesach Lichtenberg	Neal Auerbach
Feature Editor	Feature Editor
Tommy Weiss	Herz Hefter
Research Editor	Research Editor
Jeffrey K. Cymbler	Ethan Siev
Copy Editor	Layout Editor
Aharon Ungar	Danny Rothenberg
JSS Editor	Contributing Editor

ASSOCIATE BOARD

Art: Josh Teplow; News: Shmuel Charlop; Photography: David Jacobowitz; Typing: Sam Benson, Mark Sokolow; Assistant to the Editor: Leeber Cohen.

STAFF

Copy: YAAKOV K. CHAITOVSKY, MARTIN HIMMEL, DAVID SCHWALB, Jeff Indig, Moshe Rosenberg, Moshe Rosner, Ronnie Wachsberg.

Feature: Jordan Beck, Sari Cohen, Sheon Karol, David I. Mayerhoff, Marc Schneier, Martin Samosh, Jerry Stein, Jack Strauss, Joseph Zupnick.

News: ROBERT SEGAL, JACK STROH, Menachem Sklar, Brad Herman, Israel Soibelman, Louis Tuchman, Arthur Luxembourg, Howie Lerner, Paul Weinberg, Jeff Albinder, Joel Wolf, David Gerstman, David Teper, Stephen Forman, Uri Shabto, Jonathan Greenberg, Jeffrey Bernstein.

Contributing: David Foster.

It is the policy of HAMEVASER to correct all errors in publication as soon as they become known to us.

In our last issue, the closing paragraph of Mr. Reich's Column, on page 7, read, "This is but a fantasy." It should read "This is not a fantasy." We regret any misunderstanding this may have caused.

Einstein

continued from page 1

ing ample opportunity to transgress, but causing Jews to sin as well. Whether or not a non-Orthodox (or a misguided Orthodox) Jew cares is irrelevant, since "Lifnei Iver" still applies.

The AECOM administration states that the library must remain open so that a physician can quickly check existing medical literature in an emergency situation. Noble as this may sound, it is a lame excuse in the face of the many halachic problems involved. The bulk of the use of the library is by researchers and students, and although the physicians do use the library, it is rarely for emergencies. If, however, the physician does need an emergency reference, he can get the information just as quickly by calling any number of medical libraries in the New York area. It seems, rather, that the library remains open on Yom Tov and Shabbat because of the convenience it affords, and possibly because of the threats of resignation on the part of members of the faculty; but convenience has never been an excuse for sins.

It is true that if one looks hard enough and asks the right poskim, changes could be made to alleviate some of the problems. But, in a larger sense, one should not lose sight of the principles for the sake of loopholes: The idea that the foremost proponent of Orthodox Jewry, the institution responsible for the daily Kidushei Hashem that occur all over America, should allow such blatant acts of Chilul Halacha is astounding. Furthermore, for this to have gone on for almost twenty-five years with no conclusive action by the administration is even more astounding. By the same restrictions mentioned above, a religious Jew cannot remain idle and allow a fellow Jew to transgress, rather than do everything in his power to prevent it. How can Yeshiva adhere so tenaciously to the tenets of Judaism with one hand, loosen the grip with the other and not expect to slip and fall?

We therefore demand of the administration to take the obvious necessary action and close the AECOM library on all Yomim Tovim and during all hours of Shabbat. What is at stake here is not only the strict adherence to Halacha that one expects from Y.U. but its stature as a leader among world Jewry, which should never be compromised. It is too late to prevent a twenty-five-year-old transgression from happening; it is not too late to do t'shuvah.

Help Wanted

A major cause of consternation among RIETS students, veterans and novices alike, is the RIETS office itself. "Everything is disorganized," they say; "shniur placement is a disaster." The complaints are endless.

Let us examine the facts. This past summer, through a series of unfortunate incidents, the office was left without any paid help, save the tireless efforts of two work-study students, and Rabbi Charlop himself. In spite of this, the bedlam that ensued during the initial weeks of school quickly subsided. Somehow, the vast majority of Talmidim found their way to their correct shiurim, and learning continued as always. Furthermore, no less than five new programs were instituted in September, including Chaver, Yadin Yadin, the Ferkauf Kollel, and changes in the Supplementary Rabbis curricula, all successful and all initiated by the RIETS office. In spite of all this, the complaints persist.

HAMEVASER feels that much of the "poor press" that seems to be aimed at the RIETS office and its alleged inefficiency would be alleviated if something were done to make the office look like one.

To begin with, RIETS needs a full-time secretary. There is no possible excuse for months of half-hearted, impersonal, and inexperienced Kelly Girls attempting to fill what is clearly a full-time position.

If the fault lay in the lack of funding for this type of position, the money should be rerouted. If the fault lies elsewhere, it should be found and eliminated quickly. Either way, the RIETS office cannot be allowed to continue in its present state, both for its own sake, and ours.

In Memorium

HAMEVASER was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of one of Yeshiva's greatest leaders, Dr. Leon Stitskin z"l, who died on November 3, after a long illness. His contributions to the growth of the University are innumerable; his devotion was always of the highest. As a dear friend of the late Dr. Belkin, z"l, he wrote a series of works that were imbued with a love of Torah he felt and expressed through his life. Many of the institutions that were under his aegis continue to work as valuable additions to our community, and stand as living memorials to a man who will long be remembered and admired by all who knew him.

Letters to the Editor

Response to Mr. Salzman

To the Editor:

You know you're in trouble when you start saying things like, "the ideologies that have brought us to where we are must be laid aside...", especially when the reference is to religious ideologies, as is the case in Joel Salzman's article, "A Question of Peace," in the Oct. 5 issue. The article seems to strongly imply that while certain religious ideals were instrumental in recreating a meaningful Jewish state, they have since outlived their usefulness and should now move on.

Fortunately, the concepts which comprise the Jewish religion are not of an ephemeral nature, to come-and-go at our whim. Something which we accept as truth is truth forever. The tenets of religious Zionism have always been part of our Torah,

and will forever continue to be. This seems to be self-evident; why is it, then, that some people, seeing a conflict between the universal truth of religious Zionism and the untried "truth" of Sadat's desire for peace, abandon the former and jump on the bandwagon of the latter?

Possibly the reason for this is that these people do not understand that the truths of religious Zionism are in fact timeless and universal. I am led to the conclusion by the author's baseless assertion that, "(Recently, many) Jews, with Rav Z.Y. Kook as their spiritual leader, have seen fit to reinterpret the ideals of religious Zionism..." How is it possible to see the actions of Gush Emunim as "re-interpretation" of anything is somewhat beyond me, but let me try to set the record

straight.

The pioneer of practical religious Zionism, it is generally agreed, was HaRav A.Y. Kook, z"l. His unbounded love for Eretz Yisroel is clearly expressed throughout his writings, as is his profound awareness of the significance of Am Yisrael receiving it as a gift from Hashem. He surely would have been delirious with happiness and pride in his people and his emunah had he lived to see the day that Hashem would give Israel control of as much of Eretz Yisroel as we have today. And just as surely he would have been deeply ashamed of the day that Jews would refuse to accept this gift, would refuse to "spread out over the land."

To settle the land, then, and to insist on the right to do so, is not a "re-interpretation" of religious Zionism, but the true manifestation of it as formulated by HaRav Kook. To abandon these sacred ideals simply

because Sadat says so, is to make a mockery of our glorious history of messorah.

—Hillel Fendel

Gush Emunim

To the Editor:

Although I disagree with several points and insinuations of Joel Salzman's "A Question of Peace," I shall limit my comments to his observations of the actions, motivations, and effects of Gush Emunim's demand for free and unlimited settlement in Judea and Samaria. It is my belief that the uniqueness of the return to Zion in the annals of history and the logic of the current situation in the Middle East calls for a position opposite that of Mr. Salzman's. First, however, I must digress in order to lay the stages of my proof.

The return to Zion was a product of centuries of Jewish yearning based exclusively on the roots of the past; there can be no

other justification, political or economic, for the conquest, liberation, or settlement of the land short of imperialism or alien invasion. The return to Zion was made in virtue of the millennial faith that the land of Israel is ours in its entirety even when there is not a single Jew in it. On these grounds we declared our right to the land even before the awakening of political Zionism: Armed with that right and logic, there is no possibility of renouncing our right to those areas which are not at the moment in the hands of Jewish settlers or under Jewish rule.

The whole of Zionism is a combination of both vision and necessity. Both immigration to Israel and the redemption of Jewry are combinations of these two elements. Similarly, the liberation and settlement of the land can be viewed in terms of those two forces, one attracting, the other impelling.

continued on page 5

EMC President**Only On Sunday**

Phil Klapper

The alarm goes off and I struggle out of bed on an early Sunday morning. This has become second nature to me, as on Sunday mornings I have made it my practice to visit the Intervale Jewish Center in the South Bronx.

The traffic is light as I approach the toll booth on the Whitestone Bridge and I prepare seventy-five cents in change for my patented hook shot. I ordinarily spend the next five to ten minutes holding up traffic by looking for my quarters which have inexplicably missed the toll machine. I turn on to Westchester Avenue with the train tracks overhead. The buildings lining the avenue are dilapidated and many of them are burned out. I recognize 165th Street by the abandoned taxi which has been parked there for several weeks now. I park my car and activate the dozen or so burglar deterrents which I have so conveniently installed. I now stand in front of 1024 Intervale Street, home of one of the last synagogues in the South Bronx, the Intervale Jewish Center. The building is run down, with many of its windows broken and boarded up. I enter the badly neglected shul and there, already assembled around the tables, are perhaps two dozen senior citizens. I am greeted with many smiles, handshakes and kisses, and proceed to return the many good wishes. The people assembled here are the last of a dying breed, the last of the Jews left in the South Bronx. They are united by their Jewishness, their age, and I am sorry to say by their hardships. There is Davie who is endlessly drawing different signs on anything he can lay claim to. There is Mr. Sachs, the indigenous leader of the group, who owns

a bakery and every Sunday morning brings cakes and breads for all to share. There are Rose, Lucy, Mr. Flisser, Mr. Brodsky, and Mr. and Mrs. Greenstein. There is the little lady who always sits in the corner and who affectionately gave me a ballpoint pen which I kept until it leaked all over my pocket.

Successful Sons

We sit and talk for a while over coffee and cake. I am shown pictures of grandchildren and told

stories of successful children who are lawyers, doctors and businessmen. I can't help but ask myself where all these "successful" children are. How can they let their parents or grandparents live in areas so stricken by crime and poverty? Do these "successful" children really believe that they are fulfilling their obligations by visiting these lonely, sensitive people a few times a year? I then began to hope I do not become as successful as they are.

SOY President**An Open Letter**

Avraham Kaisman

Dear Mr. R.,

It's over now. Eight months of working for nothing. Remember how it started? You heard rumors that the Kashrus Committee was going to do an investigation of your establishment and you called a meeting. We were not sure what to do. We had never really planned an investigation for we were afraid of involving ourselves in a controversy which we might not get out of. But, you called a meeting. So, on that day, everyone met up here, our Kashrus Committee and its advisor, you and your rabbis. Things were brought out of that day which you were unaware of. Then you invited us down to check your establishment. We agreed to come down, for the mainstay of your establishment were our students and our alumni. We felt a responsibility to our students, for we are a student organization. So we went. Major problems were found. Problems such that no legitimate rabbi could allow. Yet,

your rabbi did. We then recommended corrections involving a large input of money. You hesitated. More meetings, more inspections.

Meanwhile our students wanted information. No, they wanted a peek. Is it kosher or is it traif? Why isn't there a simple yes or no answer? Why are they playing games? There were no games, and there is no such thing as a simple yes or no answer. There is no open or shut case of kosher or traif. It is a question of possibilities, a question of doubts. But, the students could not understand that, so we became adversaries of our friends.

People would call you for information. We were not there, allowing you to say whatever you wanted. You told people we said everything was alright when we never said anything. Phone calls came in attacking us. You even threatened us. Our students became impatient. Still nothing was done. It came time for clarification, and so, a bulletin was written stating that we cannot recommend that our students frequent your establishment. Again more flack from our students. Business suffered and you began to worry. Finally a new mashgiach was hired. More meetings, more inspections, but the progress was slow. Days and nights we met among ourselves to decide the best course of action, to be fair, to you, and to our students. Each decision required hours upon hours of discussion. But, no one knew or cared to know the amount of effort put in. How we tried again and again and how we were hindered again and again. We learned the meaning of patience and control of our emotions.

The summer came, but our work did not stop. At midsummer we were shocked to find questionable meats still being used in your establishment. We would have been justified to end our investigations at that time, but we did not. You claimed in newspapers in midsummer that you were *glatt* when you were not. We kept

Mazel Tov to Mr. & Mrs. Gary Menchel on the birth of a son. May you all have much nachas.

JSS President**Improper Attitudes**

Jerry Kaplan

What I am about to say here is not new. You've heard it all before. But recent events have motivated me to bring it up again. bring it up again.

What is the basic problem at Y.U.; the problem behind all other problems? Is it the practically useless secular library? The lack of enough parking spaces? The absence of an archeology or biochemistry major? Or is it our wonderful neighborhood?

No, none of these hassles or headaches is the major problem,

for none of them explain: 1) Why so many students are unwilling to do anything "for the sake of Y.U."; 2) Why so many alumni have fond memories of "the guys," but are unwilling to give meaningful financial support to their alma mater; and 3) Why many faculty members are here only because they wish to assist the students in this unique institution, while wishing that it didn't mean being under the employment of Y.U. Why is it that so many past and present students and faculty members are so dissatisfied here?

The answer is that the higher Administration, excluding very few blessed individuals, refuse to treat the students and faculty of this institution as people. In particular, I'm speaking of the Administration's policies regarding employment termination and retirement, which ignore student opinion" is again necessary after the proper respect due to employees.

Take last year for example. Tenured professors were released from their employment at this school. Obviously Y.U. can save more money by firing a tenured professor who gets paid much more than other professors. But where do they get the right to fire a tenured professor? Think about the ramifications! Who of any value will want to come and

continued on page 10

Committees to Evaluate RIETS

continued on page 1

no discrepancy in schedule should exist between YP and RIETS, the following observations were cited as to why Sunday shiur is not feasible: 1) Many semikha students are married and spend the day with their families; 2) Some teach at Talmud Torahs which meet on Sundays; and 3) Some have other jobs on Sunday. Again, a committee was formed to re-explore this issue, led by Rabbis Gorelick, Katz and Parnes.

Rabbi Lamm then took the floor, discussing three major topics. Admitting that there are moral problems within the student body, Rabbi Lamm emphasized the importance of strengthening rebbe-talmid relationships. Rabbi Charlop reported that two of the "so-called moral questions" brought up were cheating on exams and general negative conduct on campus. On the positive side, Rabbi Lamm stressed the inclusion of a weekly Churnash shiur by each rebbe. The initial response came from the Rav, who volunteered to include this program in his shiur.

In an effort to enhance his contact with the talmidim, Rabbi Lamm announced that he will be giving shiur once a week in Rabbi Alpert's shiur.

The following projects, as outlined by Rabbi Charlop, were introduced. Dr. Leiman, presently Dean of BRGS, is also serving

as director of the Ferkauf Kollel Program, which is coordinated in conjunction with Ferkauf's Department of Jewish Education. The intent is to help Kollel students assume positions in Chinuch, as teachers and roshai mesivta in the yeshiva movement.

The Semikha Program, in addition to Talmud shiurim in the morning, has revised its Supplementary Rabbis Program which now covers the gamut of experiences in the rabinate. Rabbi Charlop discussed at length what he noted as "the first overhaul of the S.R. Program in forty years." Until now, a semikha student was required to take six S.R. courses throughout the three years, including courses in Halakha L'Ma'aseh with Rabbi Schachter. In the words of one second-year semikha student, "The program has been quite hazardous." Rabbi Charlop, with the help of the RIETS faculty, has restructured S.R. so that in the first year no options are available.

Rather, every aspect of the rabinate is presented to the students through lectures by a large representation of the faculty. In addition, each student must take three tandems of Halakha L'Ma'aseh, taught by Rabbi Schachter. Each tandem is concluded with a Rabbinic Practicum overseen by Rabbi Dobrinsky. Included in these tandems, finally, will also be a series con-

continued on page 9

B.M. to Reopen

continued from page 1

vinyl wall coverings with a wood finish.

The shape of the room is changing too. Instead of portable bookshelves, recesses have been built into the walls to accommodate the new ones. Some of the windows have been covered to allow more wall space for sepho'im.

In an effort to improve the appearance of the Beit Medrash, the lockers have been moved from their old location and will be placed on the opposite wall, so that one will not be struck by the sight of metal lockers upon first entering the room. In their stead will be bookshelves. In addition, the old coat racks with their permanently attached hangers will be replaced with rows of coat hooks and hat shelves. In the back of the room there is a door, two feet by three feet, which leads to a compartment for the storage of shamos, which previously lay strewn about the room. These improvements, however, cannot guarantee the neatness of the room. Mr. Jay Blazer, Director of

the Office of Buildings and Grounds, says that he is hoping for the co-operation of the students in keeping the room clean.

The structural changes in the room are nearing completion, but there are hopes of an additional boon. The possibility of acquiring furnishings for the Beit Medrash depends upon the availability of additional special funding. These furnishings would include new desks and chairs. If these funds do not become available before the completion of the construction, the administration may decide to put the old furniture back in and resume studies there; as delivery of the new furnishings can take from six to eight weeks from the time they are ordered.

As the work nears completion, there are some plans being made for a chanukat haba'it to celebrate the "new" Beit Medrash. The date for the festivities has not been set because the exact date of our return to the Beit Medrash is not yet known, but it should be within the next two weeks.

by Sari Cohen & Mark Schneider

Ten Years Later, Gesher Still Going Strong

In May of 1969, a special issue of *Hamevaser* reported on the Gesher Foundation's efforts to master and overcome the dynamics of religious decline in Israel.

The Jewish tradition which should link religion and Zionism with the land of Israel and its people was rejected by the early settlers. Thus, among the problems Gesher faced when it began in 1969 was the irreligious person's ignorance and misinformation regarding tradition, both ethical and ritual. It was impossible for the irreligious person to identify with religious institutions due to the esthetic unattractiveness of synagogues and the lack of pastoral

Today the second-generation Sephardim are secularly-minded, which has had a negative effect on the schools they attend. Rabbi Tropper went on to say that the educational establishment is generally unresponsive to change. He feels that, despite this difficulty, the Ministry is slowly rectifying the situation.

The foundation's first efforts involved coordinating a master program to attack the problems at their roots: it was neces-

sary to understand the problems in depth. Sociological studies were made and statistics were compiled regarding the degree and nature of the drift from religion. The foundation (which was then just in its early stages) then proposed to institute, operate and evaluate programs with the highest degree of professionalism. Scientists, psychologists and educators were considered as individuals who must be organized. Channels for their talents also had to be developed. At the same time, a corresponding "brain trust" was being assembled in the United States. The foundation looked to creative rabbinical and lay leaders of the American Jewish Community to lend their wisdom and experience to its program. Gesher was prepared to utilize all

Update

After ten years, the problems in Israel have not changed too much. The non-Dati do not consider the religious community meaningful or morally relevant. Instead, the religious community is viewed as a self-seeking political interest group with medieval values and ideology. At the same time, the religious community feels threatened by the secular orientation of the state. In fear of the influence of Western culture, it seeks through political activities to keep the religious tradition and law. Israelis lacking Jewish identity have increased emigration, particularly among the young, has been added to these problems.

In attacking these obstacles today, Gesher's goals not only involve the merging of the ideals of both Dati and non-Dati youth, but also involve helping all different groups of Israeli youth understand their own roots and find themselves. Using basic sources of study, Gesher brings Dati and non-Dati high school youth together for the purpose of open and spontaneous give-and-take. Many of the non-Dati know nothing of Judaism and have never been inside a synagogue or seen a Torah. Gesher attempts to open the door for these teenagers to a whole new way of life. Although the relig-

"...It was impossible for the irreligious person to identify with religious institutions..."

ious practices are never imposed, many come away with at least some Jewish customs in order to feel part of the Jewish tradition. Gesher also enables the religious youth to arrive at a more meaningful understanding of Jewish religion and culture as they relate to the problems confronting modern-day Israel.

These seminars are similar to Y.U. seminars or N.C.S.Y. weekends, except

that Gesher's programs are lower keyed. As Rabbi Tropper said, "in America at an N.C.S.Y. Shabbaton you have people dancing on tables and hanging from chandeliers; try that in Israel and you'll be dancing on the table alone."

Rabbi Tropper feels that Israelis on the whole are less emotional than Americans and the N.C.S.Y. type of orientation would not succeed. Gesher is more intellectually oriented and Israelis have an advantage over Americans in that they read Hebrew. A large problem that Gesher is fighting is that many young Israelis learn Tanakh as a history course and do not identify with it.

School Substitute

The government considers these seminars to be so important that the Ministry of Education frees teenagers from school to attend them, and defrays part of the cost (Gesher's work is done mostly with high school students so as to impress its points upon them before they enter the army). Gesher provides for the training of qualified personnel, and generates new ideas in their David Schoen Institute for Creative Jewish Education. On Judaic School Days (arranged by Gesher), regular school classes are cancelled and replaced by the study of traditional Jewish sources in terms of their relevance to today's youth. For participants in these Judaic Study Days and Seminars, the foundation has organized Midrashat Gesher, a month-long course which emphasizes the importance of the Jewish heritage by studying Bible, Talmud, Medrash, Jewish philosophy, laws and ethics. Study Circles which meet weekly to discuss ways to deal with current problems have also been organized by Gesher.

Rabbi Tropper points out that Y.U. students can play a large role in Israel and specifically in Gesher. He explained that what Israel lacks today is a responsive modern Orthodox community. A tremendous contribution could be the establishment of a Yeshiva, similar in Hashkafa and scope to what Yeshiva University represents in America.

In short, Gesher can work, and does work. Ten years after its ambitious inception, the organization can boast a successful, viable and necessary role in the religious lives of all Israeli youth.



Gesher volunteer, working with non-religious youth

training of rabbis. Gesher also confronted a religious community which shunned the secular, and produced few personalities who were capable of bridging the gap between Dati and non-Dati.

Rabbi Daniel Tropper, a Y.U. muskakh and Ph.D., founder of Gesher, is now special assistant to the Minister of Education of Israel. We asked Rabbi Tropper to describe Gesher's efforts to combat the erosion of religious education in religious schools. He replied that this problem is due to the socioeconomic background of the present student population. Seventy per cent of the religious schools are populated by Sephardim. When their parents arrived in Israel they were basically religiously oriented.

sary to understand the problems in depth. Sociological studies were made and statistics were compiled regarding the degree and nature of the drift from religion. The foundation (which was then just in its early stages) then proposed to institute, operate and evaluate programs with the highest degree of professionalism. Scientists, psychologists and educators were considered as individuals who must be organized. Channels for their talents also had to be developed. At the same time, a corresponding "brain trust" was being assembled in the United States. The foundation looked to creative rabbinical and lay leaders of the American Jewish Community to lend their wisdom and experience to its program. Gesher was prepared to utilize all

Fire and the Message of Chanukah

"What is Chanukah?" asks the Gemara in the tractate of Shabbat (121 B). The Gemara continues with the famous resounding answer which has been the reason for generation after generation of Jews', Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike, celebration of the holiday since that time: "On the twenty-fifth day of Kislev commences a period of eight days during which we neither fast voluntary private fasts nor do we decree obligatory public fasts. Furthermore, during this time, we do not eulogize our dead.

What is the nature of this time for happiness?

When the Greeks entered the Heikhal, they defiled all the oils used for lighting the Menorah. Finally, when the Hasmoneans (the religious and political leaders of the Jews throughout that era) prevailed, banishing the Greeks from the Jewish Temple and Land, there was not a drop of pure oil to be found except for one small hidden cruse with the seal of the High Priest still intact upon it, attesting to its purity. Though containing only enough oil to burn for one night, the cruse was emptied into the seven lamps of the Temple's Menorah that very evening to comply with the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah each night (referred to in the Bible as "lighting the perpetual candle," described in Lev. 24 and Ex. 27). The oil miraculously burned for eight days, the period of time needed to

process new oil for the candle-lighting ceremony. The next year the Sages established these days as days of rejoicing praise and thanksgiving."

What was the miracle of Chanukah really about? Why was it considered to be such a significant miracle, especially when one considers it in light of the famous question posed by the *Pnei Yehoshua*: because of the Halakic rule that when a majority of the Tzibur are impure it is permissible to do all the services of the Temple in the state of impurity, what was the need for the miracle at all, since, after the invasion of Greeks, nearly everyone was impure? In addition, the *Beit Yosef* asks why we celebrate the holiday for eight days, when the miracle was only for seven days, since the oil was enough to burn actually for the first day.

Thousands of Answers

Though hundreds, perhaps thousands, of answers to the above questions have been proposed over the years, each generation's Torah scholars have the right to translate their predecessors' works into a jargon readily understood by their contemporaries. Perhaps the following is a fitting way for our generation to comprehend the miracle:

In essence, one can achieve closeness to G-d, reaching equanimity in his role as part of creation by simply learning Torah,

as can be seen in the Rambam's description of "The World to Come" (in the *Yad Hachazakah*, Hilkhot T'shuvah, Chap. 8, Halakha 2): "In the World to Come the righteous will sit with crowns upon their heads," which the Rambam explains is a euphemism for their knowledge of Torah

acquired in "This World." This knowledge is amplified to serve them as their spiritual nourishment, for "The World To Come." The commentary accompanying that statement explains that Torah also serves as the means by which the righteous attach themselves to the Tzror Hakhaim (the direct linkage with G-d). Hence, it is obvious that the vast majority of our sempiternal existence is contingent solely upon the learning of the Torah.



Mazel Tov to Stuart Samuels, on his recent engagement to Mimi Handler. May you both be zocheh to build a Bayit Ne'eman B'Yisrael.

However, by limiting our lifespans on "This World" and restricting our level of Torah-learning achievement to that which we reach therein, G-d qualified the means through which we can gain our places in "The World to Come," forcing us to *earn* our place instead of just receiving it as a gift. Furthermore, he created a "lacking" in each and everyone of us — the corporeal body entrenched with the Evil Inclination. This was a great Chessed for it created in us an intensive need for dependence upon G-d to overcome the "lacking," thereby imbuing us with a deeper, clearer cognition of our bond to Him. When, through our proper deeds, the lacking is filled, we reach Sh'leimut (Perfection). In consequence, the love of Israel for G-d is analogous to the appreciative love felt by a dependent woman for the man who, in return for her devotedness, supports her and embellishes her with good grace and loving-kindness. To aid the Torah learning process of purification as a counter-balance to the detrimental ramifications of material existence, G-d augmented the Torah with a practical, mundane aspect, the Mitzvot. Each Mitzvah is endowed with a unique power for Tikkun (rectification) and Zikhukh (purification) for a particular part of the body, capable of transforming it from incondite and base to exalted and holy. In this manner the body becomes an instrument to

continued on page 5

The Message of Chanukah

Footloose through Tsefat

continued from page 4

proliferate Kedushah; thereby ennobling its own existence, while having a similar effect on the world around it.

Immediate Kedushah

Still, the wondrous effects of doing each Mitzvah cannot readily be detected by the unsensitized individual. Only after years of refinement are the effects of Torah and Mitzvot in the Tzaddik, or at the very least, the constant observer of a particular Commandment. Yet, even then, most of the "power of Good" of these deeds is not readily evident. There is only one Mitzvah that demonstrates the power of Kedushah immediately.

In the Tractate of Shabbos, the Gemara states: "One who observes the Mitzvah of lighting candles will have sons who are Torah scholars." In support of this statement, the Gemara cites two cases of great Amoraim whose births and successes were predicted many years in advance by Talmidei Chachamin who had noted their respective mothers' strict observance of the injunction to have many Mitzvah-candles lit during their prescribed times for burning.

The Ramban, in the *Sha'ar Haggmul* (Gate of Reward) and the Maharal in many of his writings explain that fire is this world's representation of the power of Kedushah. Hence, one Mitzvah directly results in the evidence of Kedushah, the lighting of candles, in which the ignition is analogous to the proliferation of Torah and Kedushah. More exactly, "The candle is Mitzvah while light is Torah" (*Proverbs 6*), viz: The candle, the fire, is representative of the more physical aspect of our tie with G-d, the Mitzvot. Just as fire is part of This World but not really subject to the laws of nature (e.g. fire defies gravity, can't be lifted up by itself, etc.), and yet is a real component of earth's matter, so too is the proper understanding of the reality of Mitzvot. Torah is "light," the product of the candle, the level of purity which can be achieved while the candle is burning, viz, while Mitzvot are being observed, yet which is in itself completely metaphysical, completely uninhibited by the fetters of earthliness.

This understanding, besides offering us an insight into the saying "G-d and Torah are One" (meaning that Torah reflects G-d's will) is clearly an explanation of a third famous passage from yet another place in tractate Shabbot which speaks about the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah in the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple). "For what purpose are the candles?" asks the Gemara. "As a testimony to all that come to This World that G-d dwells amidst His people Israel," is its answer.

Through the lighting of the Mitzvah candles we can envision and absorb with our own senses the magnitudinous significance of all our actions. It is, most probably, one major factor why the Lubavitcher Chassidim, renowned for their outreach programs to all sects of Judaism, demonstrate a predilection toward encouraging this particular Mitzvah. Accordingly, the above-cited Talmudic passage relating that the stringent observance of the Mitzvah of lighting candles results in the progenera-tion of sons who are Torah Scholars is also readily understood.

Resisting the Deluge

Most importantly, we can now understand the beauty of the miracle of Chanukah. The objective of the Greeks was to submerge the Jews in a deluge of Hellenism. The very spark which forms Israel's link to the Creator, the incorporation of all that is earthly and mundane as a means to acquire holiness and eternal existence was an antithesis to the Greek culture which

stressed the body as an attribute in itself. They attempted to cut the bonds between G-d and us by outlawing Torah, Brit Milah and Shabbat, each of which play a role of special significance in the divine G-d — Israel relationship described above, and by forcing materialistic Greek culture upon the people. Their battle-cry was "Write for me, on the horn of an ox, that you have no part in the G-d of Israel." "Write for me," with the very hand that had been sanctified by doing Mitzvot, donning T'fillin and writing words of Torah, do an action, "upon the horn of an ox," the symbol of toil and earthliness, "that you have no part in the G-d of Israel."

Subsequently, when the Hasmonaens overcame the pernicious attack of the Greeks, they wanted to symbolize their having been reunited with G-d, in purity. No element of impurity could be tolerated in the all-meaningful process of lighting the candles. Although according to the strict letter of the law it was permissible to light the candles in a state of impurity, the deeper understanding of the purpose of candle-lighting did not permit the Hasmonaens to compromise their supernal standards. Moreover, G-d himself responded to their yearning to come closer to Him with an open show of affection in the form of the miracle of the candles burning for eight consecutive days and nights. Not only did they burn for eight full nights, as the *Beis Yosef* assumed in his question above, but instead, explains the Maharal and other Commentaries, they burned during both days and nights, itself a miracle not experienced since the death of Simon the Righteous, High Priest and leader of Israel during the first Temple. The number eight signifies in Kabbalah a supernatural occurrence (because of the universal representation of the cycles of nature through the number through the number seven, e.g. seven days of the week, etc.), expressing the return of G-d's presence amidst Israel in great joy and love. Thus it became apparent that the unique ideals of Torah and Mitzvot were again being achieved by the people of Israel upon beating the enormous imminent onslaught of the "lacking — inducing" Greek culture. For this reason, the next year Chanukah was established as a holiday for all generations.

Letters to The Editor

continued from page 2

Satisfaction with the areas settled by Jews, as well as the insistent and repitious eagerness to recognize Arab states in historically Jewish areas strengthens the argument of those who claim that ours is really a purely alien invasion. Our right to Hebron and Rabbat-Ammon (Amman) is no less, and possibly even greater, than our right to Tel Aviv.

I would like to examine Mr. Salzman's view that the actions of Gush Emunim have been injurious; specifically, his claim that, "their actions — lacking of any clear-cut basis in halakha — may be the only true obstacle to peace that still exists." If I understand Mr. Salzman correctly, the same group that he hailed earlier for "their spirit and total devotion" is the sole impediment to peace. Forget both Arafat's band of murderous henchmen and the Syrian-Iraqi-lead rejectionist front; the kipah-wearing settlers of Gush Emunim, who desire nothing more than to demonstrate to the world that Zionism is akin to no other nationalist movement in terms of claim to a land based on neither imperial-

by Irvin Chiott

"Tsefat possesses a special quality which enables one to comprehend the depths of the Torah, and there is no air in the Land of Israel as pure as that of Tsefat" — so writes Abraham Azulai, author of the *Chessed-L'Avraham*. Due to the "mystical" quality of this small Galilean city, many great Torah luminaries and Kabbalists settled here and imparted to it a powerful spiritual history. Although present-day Tsefat does not possess the glory of its Golden Age of the Sixteenth Century, it has maintained an unchanging charm and is replete with sites of spiritual and historical significance. Let us, then, take a tour of the Old City of Tsefat and relive its history.

But first, we must plan out our tizul. Tsefat is built on a mountain in the shape of a cone, and the old city rests on its western slope. We will start from Bet Hameiri, a villa situated toward the bottom of the mountain, which I and a group of American volunteers made our home this past summer. We will have to travel on foot, because the thoroughfares of this quaint little town are no more than crooked lanes, narrow alleyways, and uneven stone stairways.

sound of prayers emanating from a shul situated right above us! Most of these dwellings are constructed from the ruins of the great earthquake of 1837. You can imagine that Tsefat doesn't look much different today than it did four centuries ago.

From our courtyard, looking westward, we are struck by the imposing twin peaks of Har Meron, the resting place of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai to whom is ascribed authorship of *The Zohar*. Right below us lies perhaps the most notable Jewish cemetery in the entire world (in deference to Har Ha'Zeitim!). Here are the graves of many great Torah scholars and Kabbalists of the sixteenth century. Included are: Rabbi Isaac Luria ("Ha'Ari"), the prime exponent of Jewish mysticism at the time; his master, Cordiviero ("Ramak"), author of *Pardes Rimmonim*; Yosef Caro, author of the *Shulchan Aruch*; Sholmo Alkavets, composer of the hymn *Lechah Dodi*; Yaakov Beirav, who opposed

Har Meron

the rabbinic world in his desire to reestablish the institution of Semichah; and Moshe Alsheich, of the well-known commentary on the Torah. Many scholars came



Tsefat as seen from nearby hillside

Bet Hameiri's multiple entranceways and terraces, arranged haphazardly, are typical of buildings in Tsefat. Part of the town's charm comes from this lack of unity and organization. Indeed, we would be awoken early Shabbos morning to the

to Tsefat as a result of the expulsion from Spain in 1492. The Kabbalists were probably attracted here primarily because of its proximity to the grave of Bar Yochai.

There are also more somber periods of our history represented here. The military cemetery to our right contains members of the Haganah who died in the War of Liberation. There is a special section dedicated to members of the Irgun and "Lehi", executed by the British during the Mandate Period. Further down, at the foot of the hill, twenty-two graves lie in an enclosure, apart from the rest. These are the "Harugei Ma'alot", students of the Dati High School of Tsefat massacred by Arab terrorists in May, 1974.

Built into the hillside, on the way up from the cemetery, is the Mikva of the "Ari" built by his disciples. You may immerse yourselves in the sparkling water, but proceed with caution due to the biting cold temperature! One Friday afternoon, to my astonishment, I observed a native Chassid (obviously a veteran!) walk right in without the slightest grimace!

Let us now leave Bet Hameiri and proceed up the mountain through the winding maze of Tsefat. If we were to go south, we would find ourselves in the world-famous Artists' Colony. Painters and sculptors from many countries have chosen to live and create in Tsefat's picturesque and inspiring atmosphere. Perhaps, during our tour, we will chance upon an artist intensely engaged in his craft.

On our way, you will notice a drainage system running through the middle of the stone streets. These gullies used to serve

continued on page 7

Tzvi Kiletien

By Rabbi Sol Itzhak

The Jewish religious personality can express itself appropriately in two contradictory ways. One of those is represented in the divine command to Abraham, "Lekh Lekha," on which Rashi comments, "for your own benefit and advantage" Jewish life does provide the opportunity for personal satisfaction and individual happiness; the mitzvot fashion and enrich life. The other is expressed in another divine command received by Abraham, "Hithalekh Lefanai," "Walk before me," on which Rashi comments, "Hidabek B'Torati," "Attach yourself to my service." The true Eved Hashem is not concerned with pleasures and satisfactions. He does not seek personal rewards for his efforts. He is prepared to transcend his self, to subordinate it to a higher purpose, to identify himself



with a larger and more noble objective and to derive satisfaction from the success of the causes to which he is committed.

One can find fulfillment in self-assertion; that is the way of the man who has chosen the principle of "Lekh Lekha." One can find fulfillment in self-denial; that is the way of the man who has opted for "Hithalekh Lefanai."

Rabbi Leon D. Stitskin Z"l chose the path of "Hithalekh Lefanai." It is this principle that inspired and drove him all the days of his life. It is this principle that illuminates his biography and explains his career.

He was a man with a passion—as is natural for one who is moved by the spirit of "Hithalekh Lefanai." He was a philosopher of the rationalist variety; reason meant a great deal to him. Yet when he

A Tribute To Dr. Leon Stitskin

engaged in philosophic debate, he often dropped the objectivity and detachment that are so characteristic of the life of reason and argued with an enthusiasm and excitement that is natural to the man of passion. He literally lost himself in the debate.

He had a passion for the Jewish people and the State of Israel. In his early rabbinic days, he served as a rabbi in the city of Rochester. He was a power in the community and an irresistible force in movements that were dedicated to the defense of the Jewish community and the creation of a Jewish State. He fought anti-semitism successfully and provided effective and inspiring leadership in behalf of Zionism. And whenever he spoke of Israel—privately or publicly—he did so with a passion whose dimensions were coextensive with the total Jewish community.

He was a man who was genuinely dedicated to spiritual values. He displayed a certain contempt for the material goods of life. The man who has chosen the path of "Lekh Lekha" pursues the accumulation of wealth to assure his happiness and well being. The one who is inspired by "Hithalekh Lefanai" recognizes it as essential to enable him to carry on with his dedicated labors, but as possessing no intrinsic value.

He was a humble man and humility flows readily and easily from the posture of "Hithalekh Lefanai." His humility was exhibited in sensitivity towards others. He was frequently prepared to accept greater harm to himself, if it was necessary to do so, in order to avoid inflicting lesser injury on others. Notwithstanding his manifold achievements, the thought that he was in any way superior or more deserving was repugnant to him; he could not contemplate it.

He was a man of intense and uncondi-

tional loyalty—to Torah, to the people of Israel, to the state of Israel, and to the institutions with which he was associated; for example, Yeshiva University. Loyalty also follows naturally from the attitude of "Hithalekh Lefanai." In the Spring 1978 issue of *Tradition*, he wrote a rejoinder to a thesis advanced by a certain academician in which he argued that the Divine Promise of the Holy Land to the people of Israel was unconditional. His argument was derived from biblical and rabbinic sources, of course, but one who knew him could detect in his exposition his own uncompromising and unconditional loyalty to the Jewish state.

Prolific Author

He enriched the life of Yeshiva University. Students sought him out; they enjoyed his courses. He founded the Department of Publications and, over the years, arranged for the appearance of a number of volumes, some of them classics in their fields. He expanded Yeshiva University and gave it a concrete presence on the West Coast in the form of a Teacher's College in Los Angeles, a school over which he presided as dean for many years.

He was a prolific author. He wrote *Judaism as a Religion*; *Judaism as a Philosophy*; *The Philosophy of Abraham bar Hiyga*; *Jewish Philosophy: A Study in Personalism*. He was the editor of a number of volumes, the most important of which are *Studies in Torah Judaism* and *Studies in Judaica*. Prior to his passing, he was preparing for publication a new book on the minor Jewish philosophers which should appear sometime during the coming year.

His *magnum opus* was *Jewish Philosophy: A Study in Personalism*. It was an

ambitious and systematic work, the result of many years of teaching at Yeshiva University. He was determined to prove that Jewish philosophy is not merely a response to cultural pressures and intellectual currents of the day; that it is not just an attempt to reconcile the teachings of Judaism with that which passed for wisdom in every generation. Jewish philosophy is the independent theoretical development of conceptions authentically Jewish. It consists of an exposition of views concerning the nature of man and his place in the universe that are characteristically Jewish and implicit in biblical and rabbinic sources.

"Know Yourself"

He argued that man is central in Jewish philosophic schemes, not in the sense that he is ultimate, as is the case in humanistic thinking, but in the sense that he is basic and fundamental. The entire system of Jewish thought which encompasses metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and theology begins with and is based upon its conception of man. He was fond of quoting a phrase popular in medieval philosophy: "Know yourself, and only then will you know your creator."

He stressed the boundless potential of the human being for spiritual growth, moral development, and intellectual achievement, and man's responsibility to engage in a constant, never-ending struggle to realize the possibilities within himself. And, for him, this was not merely a philosophic conception; it was a practical principle. He was creative in the real of Judaism, in both practical and theoretical ways, all the days of his mature life.

He was a dedicated teacher, a moving preacher, an inspiring leader, a profound thinker and an extraordinary human being.

"*V'yizror Bizror Ha'hayim Et Nishmata.*"

A review of Dr. Stitskin's "Jewish Philosophy: A Study in Personalism" appeared in Sept., 1977. Copies are available upon request.

Rov's Shiur Analyzes "Tzibur"

By Nathan Szafir

On the Sunday evening before Yom Kippur, the Rav gave his annual Yiddish T'shuva lecture. The hall at the 92nd Street YMHA has traditionally been rented out for the occasion. However, this year the ballroom of the plush Hilton Hotel was used, with the accompanying advantages of having more than enough room for the large crowd and incomparably better acoustics.

The Rav addressed himself to the meaning of the *posuk*, "Lifnei Hashem Tit'haru," ("You shall be clean before the Lord"), specifically the words "before the Lord." The primary meaning is that one must feel the near presence of G-d: the vidui and the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy can be said with proper devotion only if one realizes that G-d is close to every person. In addition, this state of mind must be an outgrowth of T'fillah. On Yom Kippur, there is a special Mitzvah of T'fillah which, according to the Rambam, has the added aspect of atonement in it.

S'lichot is also considered to be a T'fillah on Yom Kippur (actually a fourth T'fillah even though we usually say Sh'moneh Esrei three times a day). Therefore, we must stand with our feet together during S'lichot and say Ashrei before and the longer Kaddish afterwards.

In the Gemarah Rosh Hashanah, Rab Johanan says that during S'lichot, the relationship between the Shaliach T'zibur and the congregation symbolizes the relationship between G-d and Moses when the lat-

ter was on Mt. Sinai, and G-d revealed to him the order of the S'lichot for Yom Kippur. The Shaliach T'zibur (and so too the Kohanim during dukhaming) must therefore wrap himself with a Tallit just as G-d was enveloped in an Amud Anan, since the Shekhinah, in effect, rests on the Shaliach T'zibur, and must not be seen by the congregation. By the same token, S'lichot cannot be said alone but must be said before G-d, "Lifnei Hashem," together with the Sheliach T'zibur, with a minyan.

As a final aspect to "Lifnei Hashem," the Rav mentioned that when the Shaliach T'zibur recounts the thirteen attributes, the bond of intimacy with G-d is strengthened.

Wearing a Tallit

As an aside, he mentioned other instances where a Tallit must be worn. Since Shabbat contains properties of the Shekhinah and Kaballat Shabbat is synonymous with the Kaballat Shekhinah, the Shaliach T'zibur during Kaballat Shabbat must wear a Tallit. In addition, judges must wear Tallitot while judging, since the Shekhinah rests among them, as the *pasuk* states, "b'kerev Elokim yishpot."

The Rav then spoke about the tale of Aaron and Hur supporting Moses' arms during the war against Amalek. They in effect formed a Beit Din to judge the Jewish nation, and they judged favorably. When darkness fell, Aaron and Hur ceased their support of Moses since a Beit Din does not judge at night. Similarly, the Shaliach

T'zibur on Yom Kippur eve must be accompanied by two people in order to form the Bein Din shel mattah which deals with Kol Nidrei and also decides the questions of being able to pray with the avar'yonim (sinners). Both issues are related since the avar'yonim are those who committed vows, oaths, etc. The nusach should be "b'yeshiva shel mattah" before "b'yeshiva shel ma'alalah" since the decision originates here. Further, said the Rav, the Beit Din decides whether the Jews are worthy or not, just as Moses, Aaron, and Hur did in the war with Amalek, with "Lifnei Hashem" being the deciding factor. The degree of intimacy that the Jews have with G-d influences the amount of Kaporah granted. The Beit Din Shel Mattah decides if the Jews are worthy. The mitigating factor is perhaps based on a Gemarah in the fourth chapter of Nedarim, where Rabbi Ishmael states that the daughters of Israel are in truth all beautiful, except that the Galuth has made them ugly. This can be used metaphorically for all of Israel, i.e., every Jew is beautiful in spirit except that the Galuth produces a deficit of money, knowledge and spirit. After the decision of the Beit Din Shel Mattah, we say a "shehekianu" and the holiness of the day is initiated.

Recited by Angels

On another topic, the Rav asked why is "baruch shem k'vod malchut le'olam va'ed" said aloud on Yom Kippur? A T'fillah is considered a *davar sheb'kedushah*, a holy thing, if it requires a Minyan. Kriat Shema is a Mitzvah of kriah, not T'fillah,

since it can be recited by a single individual. However, it has the added Kiyum of a *davar sheb'kedushah* if it is said by a Minyan. A *davar sheb'kedushah* must be said aloud and therefore when the Shema is recited in the Kedushah of Shabbat and Yom Tov, it is said aloud. A prayer which is a *davar sheb'kedushah*, since it is sanctified, is recited by the angels and therefore we require permission from them to recite it on earth, except when it originates in the written Torah which was given to man. It follows that the phrase "baruch shem k'vod ..." not originating from the written Torah, is usually not said as a sanctified prayer, and therefore not said aloud. On Yom Kippur, however, when Kaporah is all important and the Shem Ham'phorash is the symbol of Kaporah, "baruch shem k'vod ..." can be said aloud since it refers to the Kedushah relevant to Yom Kippur.

Hamelech Hamishpat

The Rav concluded with a short discourse on the Piyut of "V'chol Ma'aminim." The author of the Piyut remains unknown and by this very fact it is considered to be one of the holiest of Piyutim. All Piyutim are recited before the Kedushah, as a build-up to the highest degree of shirah to G-d which is the "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh" of Kedushah. If so, why is this Piyut recited after the Kedushah? The answer, said the Rav, is based on the Gemarah in Berachot which states that there are two fundamental ideas (Kiyumin) on Yom Kippur symbolized by the two endings of "Hamelech Hakadosh" and "Hamelech Hamishpat." The Piyut of V'chol Ma'aminim is not said as a Piyut but as a T'fillah in itself, thus belonging to the idea of Hamelech Hamishpat rather than to Hamelech Hakadosh.

continued from page 12

Among students possessed of secular orientation there is evidence that halakha is viewed as a standard which is remote from the day-to-day life, somehow inimical to adjustment and happiness. Amid cries about "halakhic coercion," a view of halakha which is external to the individuals' lives begins to emerge. There is a constant reaction against what is perceived as dogmatism and rigidity within Torah law and as such there is no integration or internalization of halakhic norms.

The dominant result of this attitude is that students are deprived of a great deal of meaning and direction in their lives. There is such a preoccupation with defending against the perceived "intrusions" of halakha that the individual blocks out the opportunity for either sincere Torah study or meaningful exposure to a Torah way of life. Beyond this, there is such fascination with that which is contemporary that there is a widespread failure to effect genuine self-involvement in that which is transcendent. At base, it seems that we think so little of ourselves that we turn to anything but that which is our own for spiritual and existential sustenance.

Secularized Mentality

In contrast to a secularized mentality, the opposite orientation is also to be found among members of the student body. The orientation to which I refer is manifested in a leaning towards religious isolationism and narrowness among students who are committed to learning Torah. An analysis in this case must be an especially subtle one, however. It must be undertaken with trepidation and, above all, an abiding respect of the individuals involved. More often than not the commitment of these students assumes heroic proportions and as such, criticism *per se* is out of order. Instead, the dominant approach must be one of zealous concern that these, our most vital and treasured resources, develop optimally as B'nai Torah.

Pressures

Perhaps it is because of the pressures which they must withstand and the sacrifices which they must make that individuals who are committed to limud Torah tend to cling tenaciously to every aspect of what they have achieved. Indeed, this tenacity is a valuable asset, one which engenders strength and sustains commitment. The danger arises, however, when this tenacity is transformed into an ideology of withdrawal and isolation. At this point, that which was meant to protect and strengthen becomes that which generates negativism, insensitivity and non-involvement.

This too is an indication of an inadequate self-concept, of a sense of personal and collective inferiority. On a personal level it reflects a lack of trust and confidence in individual capabilities. On a group level, it reflects a lack of awareness or concern regarding the needs of world Jewry. It demonstrates a view of Torah isolated from world experience and application. Above all, it reveals an ignorance of the nature of the Torah itself, one which acquires its fullest meaning and expression as a Derech Ha'Chayim.

V

Critical analysis of any problem imposes a responsibility to formulate and present constructive suggestions. While detailed proposals do not fall within the purview of an article such as this, I will, nevertheless, briefly present a number of ideas with the hope that, if nothing else, they will stimulate others to think.

A prerequisite to progress or change of any kind is a clear articulation of goals. If the administration subscribes to a philosophy of "Torah U'Madah" it must set about to define its goals and begin to pursue their implementation in a coherent fashion. A working definition should be accompanied by a corresponding allocation of resources so that if priority is given to "Torah

The Vision Revisited

U'Madah" in principle it should also be given to "Torah U'Madah" in actuality. Regardless of the set of priorities which are ultimately established it is crucial that they be communicated clearly, forcefully and above all, in a manner which is inspiring to the Yeshiva community.

Modifications

Once a working definition of priorities is established appropriate modifications in the curriculum should be made. Specifically, I propose the introduction of required courses in the College meant to explore philosophical and substantive halakhic issues relating to the Humanities as well as the Physical and Social Sciences. In this context, students would be free to choose among courses from any of these three areas, depending upon their major. The structure for such courses already exists since University deanships in the respective fields mentioned have been recently established. The content of such courses could be drawn from material already being developed, to some extent, in the context of Yeshiva's Chaver program as well as from curricula from appropriate educational institutions in Israel and the Diaspora. Obviously, it would be necessary to present such material to college students on a somewhat more basic level.

The purpose of such modifications would be the establishment of a concrete

presence within the curriculum geared to the promotion of Yeshiva's philosophy. While Yeshiva University has always rightly contended that synthesis is a highly individualized process, it must be acknowledged that this process requires a modicum of guidance and direction and that, as such, it is the institution's responsibility to take a more active role. These courses would not have as their purpose the presentation of monolithic or dogmatic concepts of Judaism. Rather, their purpose would be the intensive analysis of a broad spectrum of halakhic and Jewish philosophical responses to the central issues dealt with in the academic areas mentioned above. The individualized nature of the synthesis process would remain paramount. The existence of diverse "hashkofot" — ranging from "Neturei Karta" to "Enai Akiva" — would continue to prevail. The difference would be that these "hashkofot" would now be developed on a more educated, well-informed basis.

Reaching the Students

The mobilization and improvement of Yeshiva's available resources for the purpose of reaching students is also of great importance. It is not enough to accept a diverse group of students into the Yeshiva — even in the name of "Ahavat Yisrael." No matter how sincere the intention under-

lying such a policy it is the Yeshiva's responsibility to more actively bring Jewish values to students once they have been admitted to the school.

A constructive step in this direction has already been taken through the appointment of a Mashgiach for the University's Yeshiva Program. A student population as large and as varied as the one which exists at Yeshiva, however, demands the attention of more than one Mashgiach. The emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs of the student body are pressing and for this reason the designation of additional Mashgiachim for E.M.C. and J.S.S. should be given the highest priority.

"In-Reach" Programs

Finally, regarding the mobilization of Yeshiva's resources, two steps might be suggested. First, the mandates of the departments which are now so successfully involved in outreach programs should be expanded to include "in-reach" programs as well. Secondly, the faculty itself should be mobilized and their diverse views aired. The more stimulating and thought-provoking atmosphere which would be generated as a result would be by far preferable to the morass of silence which sometimes prevails. Clearly, the goal of such efforts would be to energize the atmosphere at Yeshiva, to pose questions and to seek answers. Above all, the purpose would be the creation of an atmosphere geared to the development of the Talmid Chacham and Torah Jew able to relate positively, actively and creatively to his world.

A Tour of Ancient Tsefat

continued from page 5

as a conduit for donkeys, as well as a sewage disposal (for obvious reasons!). You will also observe that many buildings in Tsefat are painted with a pale-blue color. This is used to ward off the "evil spirits" by illuminating the streets at night. Some say the blue color reminds the devils of the sea and sky so that they keep away! If you still wish to continue our trek, we will turn northward toward the main attractions of Tsefat, its synagogues.

The Benna'e Synagogue is unique in that it contains the tomb of the Tanna, Rabbi Yosef Benna'e, in a cell adjacent to the sanctuary. "The Beit Medrash of Rabbi Benna'e" is alluded to in the Talmud Yerushalaimi (Baba Metzia, 11a). Benna'e used to measure the grades of the righteous (including the Cave of Machpelah) in order to determine the point of impurity (tum'ah). The Aggadah in Baba Batra (58a) relates a number of episodes he experienced in the process.

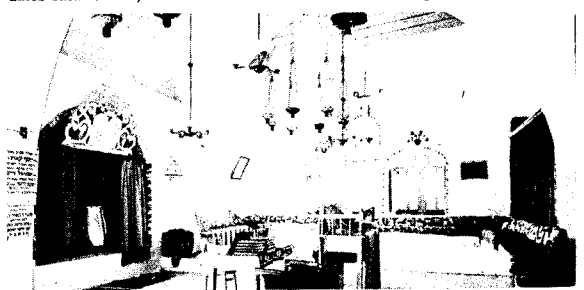
The Ha'Ari Synagogue of the Sephardim stands at the end of the lane. The oldest Synagogue in Tsefat, it was the center of religious life during the Sixteenth Century. The little cave off the eastern wall is where the "Ari" engaged in his esoteric studies. It is believed that the prophet Elyahu also secluded himself there.

Weaving and climbing through the narrow streets, we arrive at the Synagogue of Rabbi Issac Abuhab. This shul contains the oldest Sifrei Torah in the world, brought to Tsefat at the time of the Spanish Inquisition. During the great earthquake of 1837, although the remainder of the shul collapsed, the southern wall containing these scrolls remained standing! One scroll in particular, the "Sefer Abuhab", has gained much notoriety and is believed to bring misfortune on anyone attempting to move it from its present site. The legend is told that the people wanted to move it to a different shul: "So ten men immersed themselves and carried it there, and they all didn't live out the year, but

died... And once a "sofer" placed a patch on the Sefer Torah and didn't live out the year ... " (*Hibbat Yerushalayim*, 14). The "Sefer Abuhab" is brought out from the Aron Kodesh only three times a year: Rosh Ha'Shanna, Yom Kippur, and Shavuot.

A few more twists and turns finds us at the Ha'Ari Ashkenazi Synagogue. Anyone who has received a postcard from Tsefat will probably recognize it. The shul dates back to 1837, as does the beautiful

Atop the mound stands a stone pillar dedicated to the young defenders of Tsefat who fell during the War of Liberation. When the British evacuated the town in 1948, they handed over all the strategic positions to four thousand Arab soldiers. The sixty Jewish defenders were supplemented by a 162-man "Palmach" force which stole into the Jewish Quarter by hidden paths. On a stormy night, the Jews attacked and conquered all the strategic



Beit Medrash named for Rav Yosef Caro

Aron Kodesh. In the intricate, multi-colored design of the Ark, one can discern the legendary Leviathan spewing forth his fiery breath.

During the Golden Age of Tsefat, this spot was somewhat outside the city limits. And it was here that the "Ari" and his disciples would welcome the Shabbos Bride. The classic *Lechah Dodi* was composed here in Tsefat.

Right opposite the Ha'Ari Ashkenazi is the 'Apple Orchard', a designation for Paradise in the mystic tradition. This shul was dedicated in 1940, and some of its trimmings are from Germany.

Our final and most difficult ascent takes us past Rehov Yerushalayim, the main thoroughfare of modern Tsefat, and on to 'Ha'Metzudah' — "The Citadel", the summit of the mountain and one of the highest points in Gallilee.

locations, including the "Metzudah". In one of the great miracles of the War of Liberation, panic struck the surprised Arabs who fled till the last man! On May 11, 1948, Tsefat became an all-Jewish city. It remains so to this day.

"... In its midst hovers the 'Shechinah' ... (and) stand eighteen yeshivot involved with in-depth study of the Talmud ... The great light and sage Rabbi Yosef Caro ... (and) before him two thousand students sitting on benches ... " — Such was the glory of Tsefat during its Golden Age, as described by Zechariah Ben Saadia. Subsequently, the city's importance declined due to many trials it suffered at the hands of man and nature. Today, because of its spiritual legacy, Tsefat and its environs is once again attracting religious Jews. Perhaps, one day, some of us will help to reignite the spark which once emblazened its lanes.

by Rabbi Dr. Asher Siev

The uniqueness of the Torah is most distinctly expressed in its insisting that every man, as great as he may be, is liable to experience an occasional "fall from grace." The concept of man's inescapable mortality is repeatedly emphasized throughout the Tanach, Midrash, and Talmud. Chazal (Shmot Rabbah 3:15) refuse to justify Moshe's lack of faith in himself and improper assessment of his people: "At that time Moshe spoke improperly." In fact, we are taught that the destructive force of the yetzer harah is potentially greater in proportion to the individual's level of righteousness (see Succah 22A).

Thus, in essence, Judaism demands of us a commitment to fight and overcome the evil inclination within us, especially in the realms wherein it is most prevalent. Every individual Jew, regardless of age or intelligence is engaged in a daily battle against his own spiritual failings. Throughout Tanach we find the Biblical heroes drawn towards impiety and corruption and struggling to overcome their weaknesses. Imagine the mental anguish experienced by Joseph's brothers before their decision to sell him to the Ishmaelites, the years of jealousy and hatred finally actualized by their deceitful action. Yet how courageous they were in admitting: "We are guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the anguish of his soul."

Discerning Evil

Thus, the greatness of man lies in his ability to discern the evil inclination within him, and to learn to deal with them, as David said: "For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me." The man of faith never tires, never admits total defeat. Momentary weakness leaves a gap, a void longing to be filled by the re-

penting individual. The sin, rather than forgotten, serves as a reminder of man's ultimate mortality and as a deterrent for the future.

The concept of the totally spiritual super-human of Christianity is foreign to Judaism. Furthermore, it is looked upon as being a vestige of idolatry, as we see in the ancient kingdoms of Egypt, Greece and Rome where the rulers, in fact, were considered gods (*Antiquities of the Jews* of Josephus 12:5). Judaism, on the other hand, teaches that man, though capable of reaching tremendous spiritual heights, can never totally free himself from the chains binding him to Earth, nor can he completely disassociate himself from his own species. Moshe Rabbenu, Adon HaNeviim, reached the forty-ninth gate of wisdom while the fiftieth remained closed before him.

Thus, the general "hashkafa" of Judaism has trained us to treat our leader with the reverence and respect they deserve; while at the same time urging us to remember their 'humanness'; not to forget them, too. The Rambam points out that man's highest possible spiritual achievement is prophecy, which demands complete mental and emotional discipline on the individual's part. Yet he stresses that there has never been a prophet who was faultless in all respects, in all "midot." (See *Shmona-Perakim* Ch. 7). Only Moshe

Rabbenu succeeded in removing all obstacles on the path to Hashem, at which point he wished to comprehend the essence of G-d — and was denied the privilege. "For there shall no man see me and live." (Exod. 33:2).

Similarly in the Talmud, Rav Amram received the title "righteous" not merely because of his total saintliness but also because of his success in overcoming the evil inclinations within him upon seeing a beautiful woman (Kid. 81a). Many other tales are related pointing to the cardiness and honesty of the Tanaim and Amoraim in their self-appraisal and that of their peers. Indeed, it has been the nature of our spiritual leaders throughout history to admit error regardless of personal humiliation and degradation. Often the mistake could have been concealed from the general public. Rav Huna, one of the great Amoraim conceded publicly that he had made an Halachik error when it was called to his attention by his colleague, Rav Hilda. Similarly, Rava notified the pupils of the yeshiva that he had made a mistake in a previous scholarly presentation (Gitten, 43a; Baba Batra, 127a). Nothing more than straight-forward candor could explain statements by Rashi such as, "It was my custom to permit this and I have erred," (Hulin 116b), or "I was asked a question concerning a particular issue and was mistaken in my reply" ("Or Zaruah" part 2, 3156).

The Sins of Tzadikim

The beauty of Yehadut lies in its capability to allow for human error.

The purpose of Judaism is therefore to channel the evil inclination and control it, rather than consider destroying it altogether which is impossible. Though it may seem at times that one has actually succeeded in uprooting the Yetzer Harah within him — it is only an illusion, one momentary victory of no lasting consequence. Instead, man must remain perpetually on guard, forever reaching towards greatness while recognizing his limitations. The spiritual giants of our history provide us with models of achievement and encourage us to strive towards greatness, towards spiritual completeness and prophecy.

The Mitzvot are the means to be utilized by man in his search for Hashem. Rav



Rabbi Dr. Asher Siev

Pinchas ben Yair suggests a path, a road, to be taken to reach the final destination known as Ruach HaKodesh (Avodah Zarah, 20b). The Torah is the foundation upon which the magnificent structure of Judaism stands and the base which has sustained it throughout the thousands of years of Galut.

This article, in expanded form, originally appeared in the Jan. 9, 1970 issue of Panim el Panim and was adapted for Hamevaser by Moshe Weinberger.

In Honor of Jewish Book Month

Ex Libris Hamevaser

Sehardic Jews

The Jews of Rhodes: The History of a Sephardic Community
Rabbi Marc D. Angel

by Hyman Kassorla

It is rare that an author can research his own roots while concurrently giving us a brilliant study on the history of a people in an heretofore unstudied part of the world. Rabbi Marc Angel accomplishes this in his book, *The Jews of Rhodes: The History of a Sephardic Community*. Rabbi Angel's grandparents emigrated from the island of Rhodes in Greece, early in the 20th century, and helped create a vibrant Greek Sephardic community in Seattle, Washington, which is still very active today. The Jews of Greece form a microcosm of the Jewish *kehillot* in the Ottoman empire, but the "Rhodesies", as they are known, have imprinted indelible contributions of sephardic life throughout the ages.

At the apex of the community's development, there were approximately 5,000 souls living in this island off the south-western coast of Asia Minor. Because of the island's excellent location (Rhodes is about 600 miles from Istanbul and 270 miles from Athens), it was the target of many battles and wars over the centuries. Its small size, both in area and population, belie the fact that Rhodes was the center of great scholastic achievement, and produced countless Rabbis and community leaders. Rabbi Angel devotes an entire chapter on the rabbis and scholars who flourished in Rhodes. Rabbi Yehudah ibn Verga was a friend and associate of Rabbi Yosef Karo, while ibn

Verga's son, Shemuel, corresponded regularly with Rabbi David ibn Zimra, one of the outstanding rabbinic authorities of his time.

We can understand a group, their values and ideals, by transcending their daily life through examination of their religious customs and nuances. The chapter on customs, traditions and beliefs, is perhaps the most interesting to note, because through these customs one realizes that the Nazis did not completely destroy the community of Rhodes. True, in 1944, the Nazis took Rhodes and deported nearly all its Jews to concentration camps, essentially destroying all remnants of Jewish life which began in 1523. But as we read this chapter, we realize these traditions live on; they seem impregnable.

Rabbi Angel has given us an enlightening history of his people. He has relied on the saying of Rabbi Tarfon in presenting us this book, "*Lo alecha hamelechach lignor* — it is not incumbent upon you to complete the work — but neither are you free to evade it."

Religious Foundations

The Religious Foundations of the Jewish State
by Mendell Lewittes

by Marty Samoosh

"Is the State of Israel a Jewish State as envisaged by the Torah and Prophets, or is it merely a State for Jews with no particular concern as to its Jewishness?" asks the inside jacket of the book — and an important and thought provoking question

it is. Read this book if you are interested in an answer, but you must be ready, willing, and able to first wander through some two hundred barren pages before you find it.

The avowed purpose of this book is to reconstruct "the concept and practice of Jewish Statehood from biblical times to the modern State of Israel", and the author indeed does this. Starting from Moses, he moves steadily through our two thousand year history describing the various types of leaders and governments, their functions, significance, and impact. When the author finally reaches the modern era, he outlines the ideal state that he feels Israel should become. He stresses that, as an ideal state, Israel must operate on two levels, nationally, by shaping the morality of its citizens, and internationally, by influencing the morality of the world.

"So What?"

Unfortunately, the author is under the mistaken impression that flowery oration can replace original ideas and creative thought. It cannot, and the result is that much of what the author says is just basic Jewish history with no new insights added. After a short while, the reader finds himself asking one question — "So what?" The book often reads like the Bible, with filler sentences inserted between numerous, and excessively lengthy passages. The author also intersperses a considerable amount of information that is admittedly interesting, but nonetheless irrelevant.

The only area in which the book distinguishes itself is in its large section of notes. The notes, of course, contain all the references made throughout the book, as well as many interesting explanatory ones. There are also indices of Biblical and rabbinic references. But, then, who really enjoys reading notes?

Living Jewish

by Aharon Ungar

Living Jewish: The Love and Law of the Practicing Jew, by Michael Asheri, is written for both Jew and non-Jew. Because of its honesty, *Living Jewish* succeeds in providing the reader with a complete impression of what it means to be Jewish in today's society. Whereas other books of this sort center around philosophy, Asheri focuses upon practice: What it is to live as a Jew rather than merely to think as a Jew. The Rambam says the doing of the commandments brings one to love and fear the Almighty.

The book in no way preaches or judges. As the author writes in his preface, each Jew must decide for himself how observant he should be. What the book, however, does, is set the table for the study of how Jewish one can be.

The greatest advantage to the reader is that it can be read for pleasure or reserved for use as a reference guide. Each area of interest is divided into sub-categories to enable the reader to get a precise understanding of the topic without having to sort his way through a lot of "extra" information.

Dealing with experiences in the life of a Jew from birth to death and beyond, *Living Jewish* also discusses problems facing the Jew in the frenzied world of today. Contraception, abortion, euthanasia, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sex, science, evolution and more are presented in a candid and down-to-earth manner.

Essential for a Baal T'shuvah, often fascinating to all, *Living Jewish* by Michael Asheri is highly recommended.

Kahane, In Speech Here, Is Controversial as Ever

Monday night, November 20, Jewish activist, Meir Kahane talked to a portion of the student body. On this occasion he told the students his views on the Camp David Summit, his views on faith (or lack of it), and the nature of the Jewish community in America. The program consisted of a well-structured talk followed by a question and answer session.

The talk was built around Rabbi Kahane's three principles of faith (not to be confused with the Rambam's thirteen) — to be willing to make sacrifices for Ahavat Yisrael; to stand up to the Goyim of the world; and to go on Aliyah.

In the first part of the speech, Rabbi Kahane told of how the Jewish community, as a whole, is crisis-oriented. He cited the example of his talk last year which was well attended, apparently because of trouble in the neighborhood. More examples included the Jewish community not learning Ahavat Yisrael from the Holocaust and now ignoring the plight of the Soviet Jews now that

the dissident trials are over. He stressed that a little suffering on behalf of our brothers is good even if it means spending the night in jail for getting carried away with a demonstration. Furthermore Rabbi Kahane equated making sacrifices with faith, and this faith with being religious. Learning, according to Rabbi Kahane, is only more important than Mesirat Nefesh when it leads to Mesirat Nefesh.

The second aspect of his talk was about how Jews seem to be about the wishes of the Goyim, rather than stick to their belief in Hashem. Rabbi Kahane was very critical of Menachem Begin's recent mellowing, saying that he bent to pressure just as his predecessors had. He mentioned the Prime Minister's comments of a few years ago that there is no such thing as an illegal Jewish settlement in Israel, and claims that the same man is now forbidding Jews on the West Bank. The returning of land, according to Kahane is a religious matter, and added that there is an Issur to give non-Jews (specifically

continued on page 11

continued from page 1

gion and Jewish Philosophy: A Study in Personalism. He was an editor of the Rabbinical Council of America's *Sermon Manual*, as well as the editor of *Anthology of Studies in Torah Judaism*, published by Yeshiva University in honor of the late Dr. Samuel Belkin's 25th anniversary as University President. He contributed regularly to various Jewish journals and periodicals, among them *National Jewish Monthly*, *Spectator*, and *Tradition*.

Active, traveler

Dr. Stitskin was also active in numerous organizations, both Jewish and non-Jewish. In 1950, on behalf of the American Zionist Council, he traveled to Israel. Details of the trip contained in his *Report on Israel* were read into the Congressional Record of the 81st Congress, on Israel's Independence Day by U.S. Senator Kenneth Keating. The Council also published his *Report on Religion in Israel*. Dr. Stitskin was an active member of the Zionist Organization of America, Mizrahi, the American Jewish Congress, and

Bnai Brith. He was a member of the New York State Board of Equality of Education, the American Academy of Jewish Research, as well as the American Philosophical Society.

Rabbi Dr. Sidney B. Hoenig, long time friend of Dr. Stitskin, says it was Dr. Stitskin's desire to teach at Yeshiva University for as long as possible. Rabbi Nathan M. Kline, a former student, fondly recalls that his concern for a student's personal, as well as scholastic well being made him

seem more like a rebbe than a professor.

The Gemara states that Zaddikim do not need monuments on their graves, for their words serve as better than adequate memorials. This certainly applies to Rabbi Dr. Leon Stitskin, a man who was a monumental guiding force and a source of inspiration, to many students, lay people and established rabbis. His is a sad loss, not only to our community, but to Jewish Communities throughout the world.

Captive Students

Stuart Fischman

In this issue of Hamevaser there is an editorial discussing the fashion in which the RIETS office seems to have been administered this year. The most direct bearing that this disruption has had on the YP students is in the area of shiur placement. Many students found themselves "in abeyance," which means go where you want and even if you are satisfied you may be transferred later.

One may well ask why does anything at all have to be done with satisfied talmidim, but asking this question shows ignorance of something the administration considers when placing students in their shiurim.

For apparently humanitarian reasons, the RIETS office has more than just the students' best interests at heart. It has taken upon itself to maintain the enrollment of particular shiurim against the enrollees' will. This has been accomplished by turning a deaf ear to the complaints of the captive students, although those who know how to bargain can usually wrangle a promise to be admitted to a highly desirable shiur in return for their year in exile.

This system of placing students in shiurim that they do not benefit from should be ended. A Yeshiva's goal should be to give every student the finest education possible. This goal cannot be compromised to spare the feelings of certain rabbis. While the intellectual prowess or dedication of these rebbeim is not to be questioned, the ultimate judge of

continued on page 10

RIETS meeting

continued from page 3

cerning Chevre Kadisha and laws of mourning.

In the second year the student chooses one of three tracks which he is interested in: education, chaplaincy or practical rabbinat. In each section, the student must take four more tandems in the remaining two years. The third year includes advanced studies and community service. The new structure hopefully will give each individual more guidance into his preferred area of study, while integrating the different features of the rabbinat.

The meeting concluded with a methodological discussion of Talmud Torah. All of the rebbeim participated in what Rabbi Charlop termed "a remarkable and open-ended discussion." The Rav made clear his opinion that REITS has been one of the greatest centers of "Iamdish Torah learning" in the world. Rabbi Charlop also noted that YP has enjoyed a steady, annual increase in enrollment. When asked by Hamevaser why this was occurring, Rabbi Charlop concluded, "The message is going around."

Transnational Terrorism Subject of Law School Forum

International terrorism may be tied to the issue of human rights, when there are no viable channels for political change, or may be treated as a criminal activity devoid of any political or social motive. In either event, according to a group of distinguished legal scholars exploring the issues at Yeshiva University's Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, terrorism is here to stay and more of it may be in store for the future.

The views on "Transnational Terrorism: The Relevance of International Law," were offered by a number of distinguished legal experts. Dean Monrad G. Paulsen of Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and Vice President for legal education, was host for the program.

Professor Richard B. Lillich noted that terrorism "has been a reality for centuries." He said that terrorism was a political reality deeply rooted in the present international balance of power structure. "The underdeveloped nations of the world feel frustrated in their attempts to initiate political change, and their frustration grows more critically dangerous as these nations' efforts are thwarted," he said. He went on to point out that 79 percent of the terrorists obtain their original demands.

Professor Lillich spoke of the necessity of isolating terrorist groups, and said that only through full international cooper-

ation could future terrorist acts be prevented.

Dean Lockwood argued that terrorism is a human rights problem that occurs when there are no viable channels for political change. What is needed, he said, is a mechanism for political change that would serve as an adequate deterrent to violent political acts. He said that attempts by the United Nations in 1937 and 1972 to evolve an ad hoc committee of 35 nations designed to deal with the problem of terrorism failed because the problem is one which primarily affects Western nations and has no real impact on the majority of less influential and underdeveloped countries which comprise the greater part of the U.N. Assembly. He also criticized American policy in regard to human rights, citing the failure of the Congress and the U.N. to support legislation governing the establishment and protection of a standard and Universal Bill of Human Rights.

The third panelist, Professor Alfred Rubin, found that any political philosophy governed by extreme emotions and irrational acts, with no regard to human safety and the laws of the society, was counter-productive to the best interests of the entire world community. He contended that he could find no justification for acts of terrorism and felt that those activities must be treated as criminal acts devoid of any political or social motives.

In the same vein, Professor Rubin defended the Israeli government's raid on Entebbe as a necessary action essential to the protection of Israel's international rights.

Dean Paulsen said the symposium was the first in a projected series of public lectures on pressing topical issues discussed from a legal perspective, and was held in response to what he feels is an increased public concern over the fact of terrorism and its impact on international politics.

Halacha-Technology Course to be Offered in EMC

The Jewish Studies Division of YC is working on offering a course to be known as "Modern Technology and Halacha: Shabbat Laws," to be given this spring. The course will be taught by Mr. D.R. Bannet, an American now living in Israel. Mr. Bannet is a senior lecturer of electronics at Bar Ilan University, as well as electronics consultant to the Institute of Science and Halacha in Jerusalem. He is a graduate of City College and received his Master's degree from Brooklyn.

The course, which is still being planned, will deal with a number of topics relevant to today's society and Halacha. A-

mong the topics being discussed are: hospitals, pikuach nefesh and Shabbat; the use of communications devices, kitchen equipment or elevators on Shabbat; hospitals and Cohanim; and the Halachot of public utilities.

One of the major aspects of the course that is as yet unclear is the level on which it will be taught; either on a basic level for anyone interested, or on a more technical level, geared towards the more scientifically inclined. According to Dean Rabinowitz, much will depend on the registration, on how the students want the course presented. The same would hold true for the question of which language the course would be taught in.

Little else is known at this time in regard to credits, requirements or other qualifications, but the Dean urges all interested to inquire in his office.

HESHVY'S

To celebrate the reopening of the Beit Medrash, we proudly announce our Reopening Special come in for details.

We feature:
Fishburger cheeseburgers
Sandwiches
approved by the SOY
Kashruth Committee

Don't Forget! Blood Drive —
Dec. 25th 10:30-4:30 in F 501.
Your Help is Needed.

The SOY Chanukah Chagiga is scheduled for Wed., Dec. 27. Admission is \$2.00, and all are invited.

Book Review

Biblical Holy Days

An Open Letter

The Biblical and Historical Background of the Jewish Holy Days, by Abraham P. Bloch, suggests a sociological development with current festivals. Bloch combines Talmudic, Biblical, and Apocryphal sources in arriving at his conclusions. The basic theme throughout this work is that agricultural festivals have been replaced by religiously oriented celebrations. For example, many of today's fundamental synagogue practices, such as the shofar service, gained universal acceptance only in the post-Temple period. Bloch hypothesizes that the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* marked a complete change in religious rituals.

While many of the author's suggestions are grounded in Rabbinic sources, he does present several original thoughts. In an in depth discussion of the chronological difficulties in dating Purim, Bloch conjectures about Mordechai's ancestry. Puzzled by the seemingly pointless reference to one of Mordechai's relatives as a "Benjaminite man", the author proposes that this individual is in reality Yiftach, whose identity was disguised due to the questionable legitimacy of his birth.

This book critically examines many of Judaism's basic festival precepts, and provides a refreshing rationalization of these practices. Although some of the conclusions are debatable, they make for provocative and enjoyable reading.

continued from page 3

was involved. We wanted to be sure. We wanted kashrus standards to be unquestionable. Before long, you took the role of the victim and we were labeled 'kashrus vigilantes'. How can you ruin a man's business? What do you guys want? When will you leave the man alone? You play the part so well. "They have been harassing us for nine months. For nine months they have been coming

backwards at each of your new schemes. Forget how we kept quiet for you. Forget how we tried to help.

But did you really ever care? Kashrus is not your business, business is. Then came the letter sent out in October. It stated that additional improvements were seen with each visit, but these standards would have to "stand the test of time". Yes, things looked good, but time became a

Let us see it!

Now things are becoming clear. Perhaps it was your kashrus supervisor who gave the orders not to let us into the kitchen. But why should he have done that? He himself couldn't believe in a conspiracy for he claims to be good friends with our advisor and therefore feels he can use his name as an endorsement. On the phone you tell people "let the committee come back again," but now you and your kashrus supervisor tell us you don't want us back. How can you possibly think that one can lie and still maintain ne'emanus? Ne'emanus is not simply a question of kosher or traif, but a question of overall credibility.

We regret having become involved in the first place. Kashrus is dirty business. We were honest. Many people were upset with our last bulletin, the final one. It was an emotional statement. Now I must apologize to our students. There comes a point when it is necessary to explain to our stu-

dents what we have been going through and how we have been dealing with an impossible situation. Unlike what you have told people and people believe, the Kashrus Committee had to constantly make difficult decisions with advice from its advisor. We know, as you do, that in another three months people will forget what has happened and will return to your establishment. Such is apathy. You won't see me there, though it makes no difference to you. I have a sensitivity to kashrus.

Mutual Failure

Don't get the idea that we have failed or that our Kashrus Committee has been silenced. We have been strengthened; we have matured. In the process we have made kashrus an issue and have made more people sensitive to the situation. In kashrus there are no winners or losers, only mutual success or mutual failure.

Yours truly,
Avrohom Katsman
YC '79

Kashrut is not just a question of yes or no, black or white, but involves other considerations

down twice a week." Twice a week! What else have you been telling people when we are not around to answer? People are apathetic when it comes to kashrus. They want to eat in your establishment. Tell them what they want to hear. The Kashrus Committee is the aggressor. Mr. B is not feeling well. Why do you bother the man? That's right. What difference does it make now, that you invited us down? Forget how polite and understanding we have been. Forget how we bent over

factor. How well that was thought out and how true it proved to be. In November we came to investigate and you told us to leave. Your kashrus supervisor intervened and finally we were allowed into the kitchen. You followed us around on this visit, constantly threatening and insulting us. Weren't we your invited guests? You called us down. Perhaps you had a change of heart? We contacted the kashrus supervisor who apologized and guaranteed it would not happen again. But, it did.

There is a concept in kashrus of ne'emanus, credibility. Without it, everything else is worthless. It makes no difference if you find nothing wrong in the kitchen now, for there may be a problem in the future. A mashgiach must exhibit full control over his kitchen. This includes what is allowed into the kitchen and who is allowed into the kitchen. While your kashrus supervisor left permission for us to inspect your kitchen, you refused us entry. You claim a number of people have demanded entrance to your kitchen as representatives of our organization. From the outset you have dealt exclusively with the head of our Kashrus Committee. Phone calls have been made to you in which you claimed that there was a 'conspiracy' between our advisor and a prominent kosher supervision service to take over the hashgachah of your establishment. The Kashrus Committee are 'innocent dupes'. Their advisor is behind it all. Very sharp, very, very sharp. Play with people's emotions, tell them what they would like to hear. What an easy way out. What a way to vindicate yourselves. You claim you have proof.

continued from page 2

teach at Y. U. on a permanent full-time basis, when no one can ever be assured of not getting a pink slip the next day? Some of the professors were well liked and highly-respected by their peers and students. Were the students asked whether these professors were the ones least qualified to teach and thus should be fired? Overall, would you say that the Administration had student opinion and welfare on its mind, or something else?

Subtle Begging

Examples of the insensitivity of this institution's retirement policy can be seen each year. For someone to stay beyond retirement age, he or she must personally ask for an extension. The best that can come from this subtle form of begging is a one year's extension of employment. However, with this extension there is often a decrease in salary. In either event, another "request session" must be had again after the one-year extension is over. Is it right for employees to be yearly subjected to this humiliation? Should someone who has worked for Y. U. for 15 years be treated as if he came just yesterday, if the person is well-liked and looked up to by the students? If he has done the job exceptionally well, there should be no need for this policy of annual renewal. Give him a 3-to-5-year extension and stop prolonging the agony. Even though beginning on January 1st the retirement age will be seventy years old by federal law, the University is still trying to replace highly qualified teachers and employees who are only 65 and who could make effective contribu-

tions for the next 5 years. I personally know of at least 4 such individuals. If our Administration was really concerned with trying to retain good faculty and employees, then they wouldn't be trying to get rid of them before the new deadline goes into effect.

However, this new law won't solve anything, for it only puts the problem off for another 5 years. What will happen when a faculty member will turn 70 and will want to stay on? We will be back to where we started from.

The reason for this situation, we are told, is due to a lack of money. I'll admit this has some validity. True, not everyone who reaches retirement age should or can be retained. However, to simply retire everyone at 65 or 70 years old takes away too many of the top notch people we have here. One must spend money to make money. It is obvious that the present retirement system is not a viable one and only results in student and faculty resentment and general dissatisfaction.

The students are the ones being instructed, so why not let them play a major role in the final decision of who is to go and who isn't? The Administration should ask for a confidential student evaluation of the professor in question, which should play a major role in the granting of extensions. Furthermore, it is unfair to tell an employee that he'll be told every year if he will be staying or not. Extensions should be at least on a 2-year-basis. Based on these general guidelines, I believe that a more effective and humanitarian policy can be found. The result will be happier students and a more satisfied faculty.

Captive Students

continued from page 9

a shiur's effectiveness must be the student.

This is especially true in the case of our institution. In many cases the shiurim that a student hears at Yeshiva University are the last organized ones he will ever attend. To waste (which is exactly how the student views it) a year of learning is criminal. At best the student will stagnate; at worst, he will develop a cynical attitude towards the entire Yeshiva Program and not go to shiur at all.

I understand that committees have been formed to look into

the problem of shiur placement. My suggestion is that the student and his maggid shiur of the past year should decide where the student should go. In proposing this system I am assuming that the student will be honest with himself and not let ego gratification play a role in the process.

Permitting students to go to the shiurim they choose will fill to bursting some already overcrowded shiurim. To remedy this problem, new rebbeim should be hired to replace the ones that will leave. And for those whose shiurim will be filled to capacity, **ashreikem shezaknitem l'hanig banav shel Makom.**

The placement of students in the shiur of their choice will, I hope, improve the motivation of the students in YP and improve the level of learning of Yeshiva College in general.

I feel that the ones who will be doing the learning deserve to choose where they will learn.

The Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and Union of Councils for Soviet Jews have been asked by Avital Sharanaky, who is compiling a book about her husband Antoly, to collect copies of interesting correspondence your readers may have received from him before his arrest in 1977, or anecdotes from visitors to the USSR who had met with him. The material should be sent to the SSSJ at 200 West 72nd Street, suites 30-31, New York, N.Y. 10023, and will be forwarded to Avital in Israel.

**Pre-Chanukah
MUSICAL PROGRAM**
sponsored by
Cantorial Council of America
and the
Cantorial Training
Institute
to be held Sunday, Dec. 17,
1978 at 1:30 p.m., 4th Floor,
YU Museum.
ADMISSION FREE

Senter Discusses Problems in Hashgacha Kahane Speaks

continued from page 1

of Kosher Supervision Service, more popularly known as Chaf-K explained that a knowledge of food chemistry, food processing and the legal responsibilities of food producers were all necessary in certifying a product Kosher.

100% Pure

Rabbi Senter said that twenty years ago people read the ingredients on a label and if vegetable oil was in the list the product was avoided; if it said "pure 100% vegetable oil" it was kosher. The fact is that by law if a product lists vegetable oil as an ingredient it all may not be adulterated at all. "Pure and 100%," Rabbi Senter said, "are propaganda words." However this does not make the product kosher. Though crude vegetable oil—whether corn, sunflower, soybean or peanut—is kosher, it is dirty, "has a terrible obnoxious odor; it is chalusis!" and has a very unappealing color. The processing takes out the dirt, deodorizes it and bleaches the oil at very high temperatures. Rabbi Senter explained that these same procedures are applied to animal fat, beef fat, and lard on the same equipment. The problems are that there is no Hag'alah and the equipment is aina ben yoma (it

has been used within twenty-four hours). Rabbi Senter himself described a plant which had "just superficially flushed" out its equipment and "then refined soybean oil."

Health foods have more sh'atol because everything is from natural sources. "All Natural" only refers to the absence of chemical additives. "Lard and beef fat are very natural sources." A reliable Hechsher is therefore required.

Flexible Ingredients

The law concerning food products allows for flexibility in listing ingredients of any given product. Any food produced and manufactured in the conventional way of manufacturing the product need not list its ingredients. That is why ice cream containers, for example, never list ingredients; they are all made in the same way. "To my knowledge," Rabbi Senter said, "there is no ice cream not made with emulsifiers and stabilizers." (An emulsifier is a product which helps mix two substances which otherwise would not enter into a homogeneous suspension. A stabilizer keeps them in that suspension.) Emulsifiers and stabilizers give ice cream a smooth consistency, and prevent ice crystals from forming and the

cream from separating out of the other ingredients. Monoglyceride, an emulsifier, is sometimes made of hydrogenated lard.

Also, processing aids (ingredients used in the processing of a product and not in the product itself) need not be listed by law. A release agent (pan oil) might not be listed because it is not put into the batter, though according to Halachah it would make the bread traif. Hard candy is made in a vat coated with release agents to allow its ingredients (water, sugar, corn syrup, food colors and additives) to flow easily from the vat. Rabbi Senter said that, based on his experience and on what he has been told, this process applies to all hard candies. "Therefore, hard candy has to have Hashgachah," Rabbi Senter pointed out that

synonymous with 'kosher.' Synthetic, he said, is defined as a man-made substance, something not found in nature. However, "a lot of chemicals start with beef fat." The law, Rabbi Senter explained, insists that if, for example, flavor is not pure natural grape the label must read "imitation grape"; however, this does not preclude the possibility of the inclusion of some natural grape juice, which is prohibited by Halachah because it is stam yainam. Justifying the need for Hashgachot on soda, Rabbi Senter explained that a cherry, raspberry or blueberry flavored food may include "flavor boosters" or "enhancers," among them grape flavoring.

In an accompanying question and answer session, the following

The speaker answered the questions, "Why do we need Hashgachot?" "What are the Sh'elot?"

Lifesavers need a Hashgachah because of the calcium stearate used in that product which is usually derived from animal products, and do not have one.

Of the Kellogg's cereals, Rabbi Senter said: "I feel that there are problems with the use of that particular brand." Because cereals are essentially "nutritionally worthless," the cereal companies add vitamins—among them A and D—to enrich the cereal. Vitamins A and D are in a powdered form which may only be diluted in oil, not water. Problems arise in the use of vegetable oil which has been processed. The cereal labels used to say "vitamins A and D in vegetable oil." However, Kellogg's discovered that they were getting "static" from their Boro Park retailers, and sales were dropping. They then found that by law it was not required to include the words "in vegetable oil" on the label. They removed the offending phrase and sales rose. "I was once quoted as saying that Kellogg's cereals are coated with lard. I said no such thing."

Exert Pressure

Rabbi Senter suggested that efforts ought to be made by the Orthodox Jewish Community of this country to secure Hashgachot on certain products. "The Jewish market," he said, referring to Kellogg's products, "is accepting them without Hashgachah. The Jewish public has a tremendous strength that it underestimates. If we demand certain things we get it." Rabbi Senter also suggested that pressure ought to be exerted on Jewish camps and other organizations to stop using products without Hashgachot.

Turning to the topic of imitation flavors, Rabbi Senter said: "artificial" and "synthetic" are not

points were also brought out:

—The Hechsher on Howard Johnson's ice cream applies only to some ice creams, and certainly not the Howard Johnson's parlors which are not under Hashgachah. Not all flavors have a Hashgachah, e.g. coffee brandy and peppermint. Therefore one ought to ask the person serving to wash off the ice cream scoop well.

—Though a company's letter concerning a product's ingredients is trustworthy, it is a dated document; a corporate decision to change ingredients would not be unethical. Hashgachah alleviates this problem.

—Though both the S.O.Y. "Guide to Kashrus" and a recently published magazine, "Kosher Home," list the rabbis giving Hashgachah on certain products, neither of these publications endorses the reliability or the expertise of the Hamachshir.

—So-called "non-dairy" creamers containing calcium caseinate are milchik.

—Based on Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik's hora'ah (decision), Kosher Supervision Service gives a Hashgachah to Arnold's bread which is milchik. The word 'dairy' must be spelled out entirely; a 'D' is not sufficient.

—Salt containing polysorbate-80 as a free-flowing ingredient requires Hashgachah year round, including Pesach.

The meeting concluded with the announcement that lectures such as these will continue throughout the year.

Mazel Tov to Phil Klein on his recent engagement. May you and your Kallah have continued happiness forever.

The Editor takes this opportunity to thank his brother and sister-in-law for giving him a perfect nephew.

continued from page 9

Arabs) permission to dwell in the land. He mentioned that the Israelis must not give in to the non-Jewish world, as Begin did at the Camp David Summit by granting the Palestinians autonomy, and that peace can only be achieved by the Arabs giving in.

Rabbi Kahane's final point was the necessity of immediate Aliyah as a demonstration of faith. Jews must get out of Galut because there is nothing outside of Israel for Jews. The average non-Jew hates Jews, but won't readily admit this prejudice, according to Rabbi Kahane. At any moment, he warned, the situation in Galut may take a turn for the worse and unless all Jews make an effort to go on Aliyah, Mashiach won't come until his appointed time. If Eretz Yisrael is inhabited by Jews the world won't press for the return of any land.

Before the question and answer session Rabbi Kahane requested volunteers to join his new movement, which is to be a "sane, normal, activist group." He also stressed the importance of the upcoming demonstrations to put pressure on the U.S. He also would like to pressure Menachem Begin to return to his old ways, because he is a "good Jew."

Q and A

During the question and answer session Rabbi Kahane had many other things to say. He said that he would advocate a second Jewish state, on the West Bank, contradicting his earlier statements that the Jewish nation is one entity, not a group of separate entities. He then explained that it would not be a separate state, but a parallel state. When asked to plead with Ambassador Young to obtain American visas for Iranian Jews, Rabbi Kahane refused, calling them fools for not heeding his advice six years before. If they really want to emigrate any place, Rabbi Kahane said, they should go to Israel, to where they will have no trouble getting visas.

Rabbi Kahane proved once again that he can still be as controversial as ever. The Yavneh Club sponsored the volatile Rabbi's talk.

HAMEVASER would like to congratulate Rabbi Chaim Bronstein on his appointment to the position of Assistant Dean of RIETS.

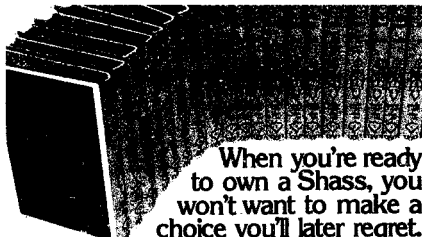
WANTED: Volunteers or work-study students to arrange seforim in Morg and Furst Hall Batei Medrash, either day or night. If available, please come to RIETS office.

The Geshur Foundation invites everyone to join them in their efforts to "Bridge the Gap" between religious and non-religious Israeli youth. Volunteers are needed in the U.S. and Israel. For more information, contact the NY office, 3 W. 16th St., NYC (212) 929-7776.

M.P.PRESS INC.

PROUDLY ANNOUNCES

The exclusive distributorship to the Y.U. community by **David Etengoff** of our complete line of classical rabbinic seforim and Torah commentaries.



When you're ready to own a Shass, you won't want to make a choice you'll later regret. You'll want the best.

In the nearly 500 years since the first complete printing of the Shivas hegan, there has never been a finer quality or more reliable edition than the M.P. Press Shass.

In addition to our well known full-sized

Vilna Shass we also publish:

Shulhan Aruk	Mishnot Yohan Boaz
Talmud Yerushalmi	Mikraot Gdolot
Tur Shulhan Aruk	Nach Malbim
	Dikduke Sofrim

Please Contact David Etengoff at Furst Hall, Room 305 or 201-837-0573

Contributing Editor

Torah U'Madah — The Vision Revisited

Danny Rothenberg

I
Yeshiva University came upon the American scene at a time in which, in the minds of many Jews, the relationship between Judaism and day-to-day existence was becoming increasingly tenuous. A polarization between that which was Jewish and that which was societally oriented began to emerge within the Jewish consciousness. There was a sense that a choice, a decision was to be made between Judaism on the one hand, and viable participation in reality on the other.

Yeshiva arose as a response to this emerging polarization. As an institution, its creation embodied an implicit rejection of the insidious contention that a Torah way of life is somehow irreconcilable with a normative human existence. As such, it served to renounce the contentions and beliefs of those who saw the relationship between Judaism and human existence as dichotomous.

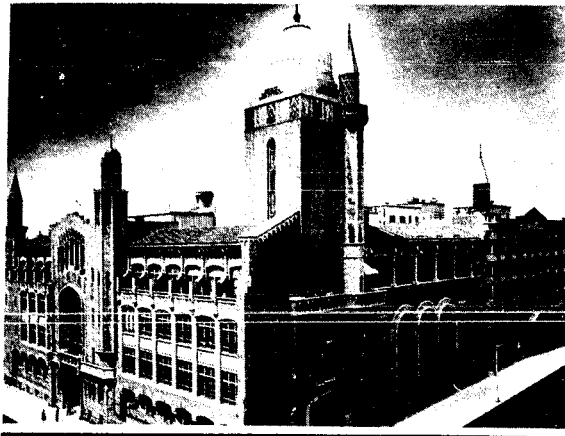
In place of the polarization which had racked Jewish consciousness, Yeshiva promulgated a philosophy which came to be known as "Torah U'Madah." This philosophy is founded upon the conviction that the Torah embodies a way of life which encompasses and pervades all aspects of existence; that nothing is external to Torah or Judaism; that all experience takes on abiding meaning in the context of the Derech Ha'Chayim proposed by halakha.

It must be stressed that "Torah U'Madah," as I understand it, is not a concept which seeks to minimize or deny the basic differences between Judaism and other world philosophies and approaches. Nor is it a conception whose ideal is Jewish mergence with secular society. Rather it is a philosophy which seeks relatedness to society rather than oneness with it. The very formulation of the words "Torah U'Madah," that is, their very order, reflects a hierarchy of values. It is not a conception which proposes Torah and Madah as co-equal systems. Rather, it is one which states that Torah subsumes Madah just as it gives unique context and meaning to every aspect of life. As such, it is a philosophy which insists that participation of the Jew in society should be distinctively Jewish, using Torah and halakha as the standard of day-to-day functioning.

Nature of Society

Most basically, "Torah U'Madah" has its origins in a realization about the nature of society and the relationship of humanity in general and the Jew in particular to it. It is a conception which views society as a dynamic entity, one whose effects are as vital as they are inexorable. As such, withdrawal from society is not a live option because societal forces will pursue and effect individuals no matter where they are, no matter how mightily they resist. Finally, it is a conception which contends that withdrawal and isolation from society engenders defensive and negativistic world views, views characterized by a morbid preoccupation with the "sur me'rah," leaving insufficient room for the "va'ashev tov."

What Yeshiva has proposed is an ideology of initiative in place of psychology of negativism and retreat. It asserts that it is better for the Jew to act than to react, better for him to be in a position to come to grips with the challenges which society generates—on his own terms. The ultimate goal, as I understand it, is the development by way of an educational process, of Talmidei Chachamim and B'nai Torah who, in the face of environmental challenges, emerge with a commitment to Judaism which is stronger and more integrated be-



The author contends that although begun with good intentions, Torah U'madah is slowly losing ground.

cause it has withstood the pressures of reality and demonstrated its pre-eminence as a viable way of life.

II

Having attempted to delineate and present the ideal of Torah U'Madah, its evolution and its substance, it is possible to turn to an examination of the reality as it prevails at Yeshiva. I have characterized the philosophy as a visionary one, one which has as its sole purpose the promotion of Torah learning and Jewish life. The approaches which the administration, faculty, and students use in pursuit of the ideal and the mentality which underlies that pursuit are all aspects of the vision itself. Thus, if the attainment of the ideal is of importance to us, it is crucial that we examine the extent to which that ideal expresses itself within the reality at Yeshiva.

It must be stated at the outset that this examination is not undertaken from a critical or negative perspective. There is much greatness at Yeshiva; the contributions which it has made are perhaps unrivaled both qualitatively and quantitatively. Yet, it is the very greatness of the institution which demands that its present course be examined in an effort to assure its ultimate survival and success. For the purposes of this discussion I will operationally define the "Torah" aspect of Yeshiva University's philosophy in terms of the mechanisms which have been established for the promotion of Torah learning. I will use the term "Madah" in its broadest, non-technical sense, i.e. as a reference to a general sense of relatedness to the world. (I do this recognizing that many other acceptable definitions might be proposed. Nevertheless, I choose this definition because the discussion here will center upon a mentality, a set of attitudes rather than specific applications and manifestations of Torah within the physical and social sciences or the humanities.)

Perhaps the most serious threat to the attainment of Yeshiva's ideals is the gradual return to a polarized world view which seems to be taking place in the minds of many of the institution's administrators,

faculty members and students. It is the same kind of polarization to which I referred earlier, a creeping almost imperceptible re-emergence of a dichotomous view of Torah Judaism as it relates to human existence. Ironically, the very dichotomies which Yeshiva University was meant to resolve are beginning to re-surface within the institution itself. In concrete, practical terms this means that there are individuals within the University who have come to make an active, conscious distinction between the needs of the University and the needs of Yeshiva. As such, these individuals implicitly negate the very reason for Yeshiva University's existence.

It is the underlying cause of this renewed polarization which needs to be focused upon here. I believe that cause to be an inadequate self-concept and more accurately a pervasive sense of inferiority. It is that sense of inferiority which causes us to mistrust ourselves, drift away from the philosophy of Torah U'Madah and seek out other ideologies either because they are more alluring or because they are more simple.

III

Administration and Faculty

One aspect of the sense of inferiority to which I have referred is embodied in a drift

toward secularization. A venture which began as an attempt to create B'nai Torah who are able to rise to societal challenges has been distorted, by some, into a secular slavish adulation for that which is secular. For these individuals, decisions are made and policies are implemented on the basis of values held by society in general rather than as an expression of that which is indigenous to Jewish thought and aspirations.

In some cases, these decisions are made out of sheer ignorance. That ignorance is inexcusable, however, when it is exhibited by people occupying positions of power. In other cases the decisions are the expression of a mentality which is apologetic to the secular world, one whose ultimate success would be the transformation of Yeshiva University into a university like any other. In any case, the results of this mentality are expressed in the most basic of terms: within the context of allocation of financial resources and the projection of academic policy and priorities.

Sense of Inferiority

But there is another side to the sense of inferiority, one which stands in diametric opposition to what I have just described. It is embodied in the inadequate self-image of Yeshiva with regard to itself. Some eighty years after this institution's inception there are those who are still apologizing for its existence. Reacting to an onslaught of criticism by individuals (and I stress that these are only individuals and not whole institutions) from Yeshivas and organizations of other political persuasions, our own realization of Yeshiva University's greatness is sometimes washed away in a rush of apologetic feelings. As a result, we tend to forget that for decades Yeshiva University was perhaps the only institution which was producing musmachim and graduates capable of communicating traditional Torah values to alienated and non-alienated Jews alike. We tend to forget that for years the vast majority of the American Jewish population was written off by many members of the Torah community and that during that time it was Yeshiva University which, almost alone, sustained an ongoing commitment to all Jews. While other orthodox Jews occupied themselves with vitriolic attacks and infighting, Yeshiva stood at the forefront of educational and outreach movements. In short, we tend to forget who we are and, as a result, our sense of mission is vitiated.

IV

The Student Body

The same inadequate self-concept prevails within the student body as well.

continued on page 7

HAMEVASER
500 West 184th Street
New York, N.Y. 10033

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
New York, N.Y.
Permit No. 4688